

Poverty, Heresy, and the Apocalypse

*The Order of Apostles and Social
Change in Medieval Italy 1260–1307*

Jerry B. Pierce

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Maps

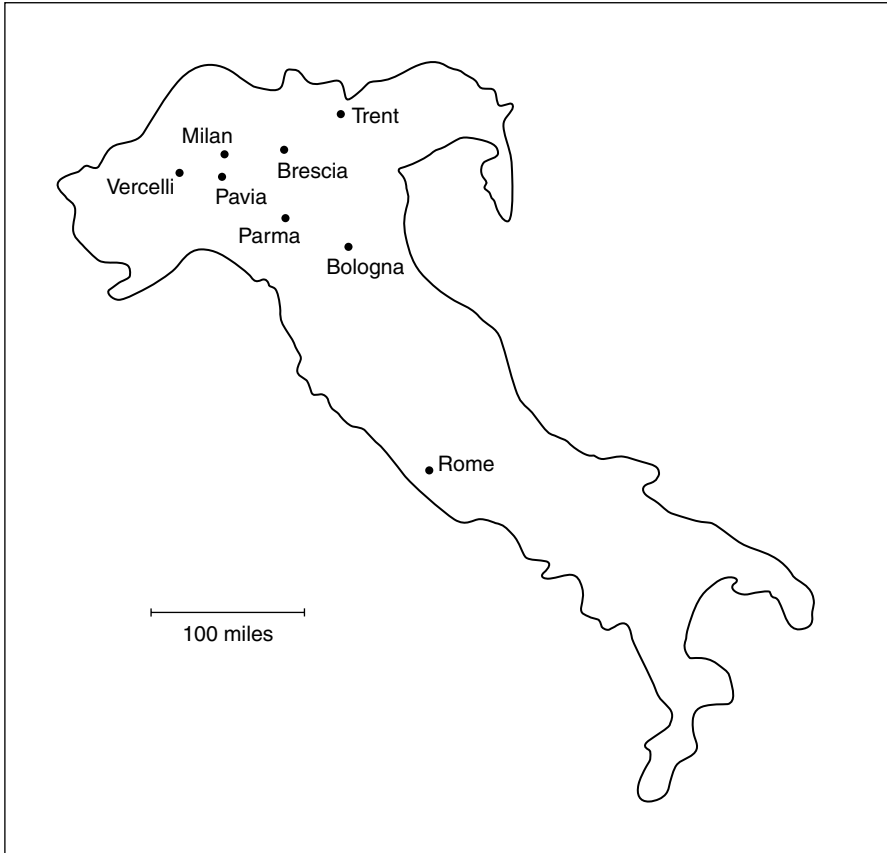
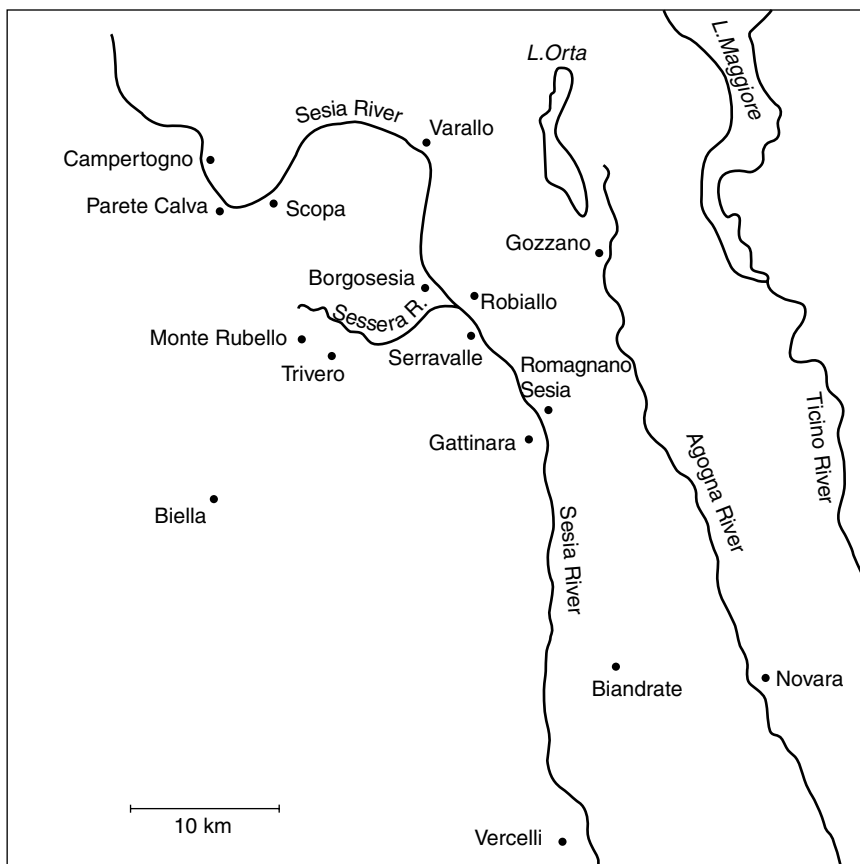


Figure 1 Italy in the 13th century



Valsesia, ca. 1300

Prologue

On February 28, 1993, while an undergraduate at the University of Oregon, I watched a news story developing in Waco, Texas, about a failed federal government raid on a fortified compound of “cult” members. According to most media outlets, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) had been in the process of serving a warrant regarding the possession and sale of illegally modified firearms when members of the “cult” fired upon them, killing four ATF agents and wounding several others. In the ensuing gun battle, several members of the Branch Davidians also died. The ATF eventually called off the assault when they ran out of ammunition, establishing a secure perimeter around the compound, known by its members and locals as the Mount Carmel Center. As the story developed throughout the day, more details emerged: the members of this religious movement, the Branch Davidians, whom disapproving locals and government authorities referred to as a “cult,” had stockpiled numerous automatic, high-powered weapons. The “cult” traded in the manufacture and sale of methamphetamines. Their leader, David Koresh, not only claimed to be the messiah but also claimed for himself numerous wives, some of them minors, with the women and children inside the compound either “brainwashed” by Koresh or being held against their will.

For the next 51 days I watched as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) managed the situation and entered into negotiations with David Koresh. Despite FBI press release claims that they wanted the siege to end peacefully, the agency positioned numerous armored assault vehicles around the Branch Davidian complex, illuminating the buildings with high-powered spotlights and blaring disturbing sounds and music throughout the night, all in an attempt to force those inside to surrender as quickly as possible. The news media provided daily (often hourly) updates of the siege, consistently emphasizing the group’s alleged practice of polygamy and rumors of the sexual abuse of children. According to later testimony before a congressional hearing, it was the FBI’s repeated insistence on child abuse that prompted Attorney General Janet Reno to authorize an “escalation” of the siege in early April. In essence, this change of tactic was an order to attack the Mount Carmel compound with tanks and tear gas in order to force the Davidians to surrender.

Just before dawn on the morning of April 19, the FBI launched its assault. Armored vehicles punched gaping holes through various parts of the compound, then saturated the interior with massive amounts of tear gas. Despite FBI commands to exit the compound, no one did. As the assault continued, 30-mile-an-hour winds began to disperse the initial tear gas, so agents requested and released much more than originally planned to force the occupants outside.

On my way to class that morning, I stopped by the university bookstore for coffee and noticed a number of people gathered around one of the televisions there. Behind the “Breaking News” logo, a video camera showed the usual Mount Carmel compound and the by now usual image of an armored vehicle patrolling its perimeter. Unusual were the twin columns of black smoke rising from opposite ends of the compound. As we watched, large orange flames burst out of windows and jagged openings, whipped into a frenzy by the strong winds. In just over 6 minutes, the entire structure was engulfed in flames without a fire engine in sight. Minutes later, the roofs and walls began to collapse as black smoke boiled away into the Texas sky. Only one person emerged from the flames. The rest, 51 adults and 23 children, were killed in the raging inferno.¹

I was persuaded at first by the initial assessment provided by FBI spokespersons that the Branch Davidians had committed mass suicide similar to that of the followers of Jim Jones in Guyana in 1978. After all, the Davidians were a cult. Koresh claimed he was the Messiah. All of Koresh’s teachings seemed to revolve around interpretations of the Book of Revelation, the apocalyptic treatise at the end of the Bible. They stockpiled weapons and ammunition as if expecting an armed confrontation. And of course, there were the accusations of child endangerment that implied the abuse of innocents. The Davidians were a militant Christian sect that refused to cooperate with federal authorities and rather than surrender peacefully, they chose to die a violent, self-inflicted death. All this seemed to fit nicely with my preconceived, media-fed notions that “cults” threatened the social fabric with their secrecy, their ideological subversion, and their single-minded devotion to demented, egomaniacal leaders.²

Through the ensuing years, the image of the burning compound under assault by federal forces stayed with me. But something about Koresh’s biblical interpretation of the Apocalypse did not seem to fit with how the events at Waco unfolded. It was not until I began researching medieval apocalyptic thought a few years later that I began to see parallels between Waco in 1993 and events in Europe during the period of the late Middle Ages. My studies specifically concerned religious enthusiasts often referred to as the Order of Apostles, or, more derisively, the Pseudo-Apostles, who formed as a group in the Italian city of Parma in 1260 preaching poverty and penance. Despite an apparently peaceful beginning and a period of widespread growth, by 1300 the movement had fallen out of favor with ecclesiastical authorities in part because of the aggressive propaganda of rival

Franciscans that accused the Order of Apostles first of sexual misconduct, and later of heresy. Pursued by papal inquisitors in Bologna and Trent, group members suffered a series of imprisonments and public burnings that forced the survivors, under the leadership of the apocalyptic preacher, Fra Dolcino, to withdraw to the isolated valleys of Valsesia. Once there, he and his followers, who likely would have been labeled a cult in modern popular parlance, barricaded themselves against papal forces. Ultimately, the followers of Dolcino perished after a pitched battle with crusading armies in 1307.

The events in modern Texas and medieval Italy share some striking similarities, such as the accusations of illicit sexual behavior, atypical religious beliefs, and an apparent disregard of authority. Such similarities are also evident in the rhetoric of marginalized apocalyptic discourse employed by both Koresh and Dolcino, where persecution by authorities (state or church) is seen as validation of the group's principled stance. Although there are clear differences between the two groups, in both cases there is more to the story than the official narratives that, again in both cases, were penned by those who had actually fought the Davidians and Dolcinites.

Introduction

Poverty, Heresy, and the Apocalypse examines the rise and fall of a medieval religious group called the Order of Apostles that began with noble intentions and orthodox support but ended in the fires of heresy. Originating in the Italian city of Parma in 1260, the group was founded by Gerard Segarelli, a man of moderate means who had become fascinated by the Franciscan concept of voluntary poverty as a path to salvation. Although Segarelli was refused entry into the Franciscan Order, he channeled his piety and religious fervor into acts of renunciation and charity, which soon attracted followers who, like Segarelli, believed that a life of apostolic poverty was the true path of Christian devotion. As Segarelli's cohort grew in number and fame, they were initially praised and encouraged in their endeavors by ecclesiastical officials, including bishops and archbishops. Unfortunately, others, particularly the Franciscan, and fellow Parma resident, Salimbene de Adam, wrote at length about Segarelli and his Apostles' alleged foolishness and misguided devotion. This rivalry between the established (and better-connected) Franciscans and the new Order of Apostles eventually worked against the latter, culminating in deadly charges of heresy in 1300. It was this claim that cost Segarelli first his freedom and then his life.

Rather than collapse, the Order's leadership was assumed by one of its members, Fra Dolcino, who interpreted the ecclesiastical crackdown on Segarelli as a sign that the institutional church had lost its way and had become corrupted by its power and worldliness. Dolcino delivered his theories in a series of increasingly apocalyptic letters in the years immediately after Segarelli's execution, clearly dividing his fellow Christians in terms of good (the Apostles and their supporters) and evil (the Roman Church and its supporters), and predicting a cataclysmic end to all the enemies of Christ's "true" church. Pursued by understandably outraged inquisitors, Dolcino and his followers fled north into the Alpine foothills, eventually settling in the Sesia river valley. It was here in Valsesia that they gathered and prepared to make a final stand against papally sanctioned crusaders. After a series of initial victories, and with the assistance of the local populace, Dolcino's group was eventually thwarted by dwindling supplies, a harsh winter, and a foe that had access to a seemingly endless amount of resources. Dolcino's meager fortifications were overrun, countless followers were slaughtered, and he himself was captured, tortured, and brutally executed, his mutilated remains a bloody example for all who dared rise in opposition.

This current study of the Order of Apostles is more than just a story about one small group of heretics in a remote Alpine valley; it is the first to assess the place of individuals like Segarelli and Dolcino in the larger context of upheavals taking place in High Medieval Europe. As Europe began to pull itself out of the chaos following the collapse of the Carolingian Empire and the subsequent, repeated invasions of Vikings, Muslims, and Magyars, it experienced massive changes to its social, political, and economic structure. Isolated, often fortified, communities gave way to interconnected towns and villages. Regional, and even international, trade prospered once again at levels not seen since the height of the Roman Empire, and a growing merchant class, with its often highly public displays of wealth, helped promote the spread of luxury goods, visibly increasing the standards of living for some but also reinforcing the disparity between rich and poor. Governments (civic, monarchical, and also papal) likewise benefitted from a vibrant economy by harvesting tax revenue to fund their ever-expanding armies and bureaucracies, thereby extending their control over diverse regions and peoples.

Not only were these changes drastic they also mostly occurred simultaneously and it is the convergence of these trends that ultimately sparked extreme responses like heresy and popular rebellion. In the case of Segarelli, Dolcino, and the Order of Apostles, we actually witness both responses, albeit spread out over several decades. Examining the rise and fall of the Apostles thus allows us to see how the transformation of European society between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries was experienced by diverse groups, from the small landowners and peasants around Parma, to the noble family members who left their inheritances to join the movement, to the feudal lords and bishops who took up arms against the revolutionary threat posed by heresy. Thus, developments on a macro, European-wide scale (such as church/state conflicts or the consolidation of royal power) are examined in terms of how they impact society at the micro level (parish churches, villages, and even individuals themselves).

This work is not a simple inversion of the traditional tale of the Order of Apostles, where they now become the hapless victims, while the church is stigmatized as the heartless aggressor. Instead of relying on facile and sensationalistic stereotypes, this study examines the multifaceted membership and motives of all the actors and thus, rather than demonizing or lionizing them, it allows us to appreciate each group of individuals on its own terms. As such, among the themes that this work will consider will be the social/class structure of the Apostles, the role of gender in the Order's membership and ideology, and the appeal of apostolic poverty and apocalypticism to these groups. Overall, this work traces the day-to-day effects of competing religious doctrines on individuals and their communities, particularly how a single individual's interpretation of Christian Scripture (such as Segarelli's) had dramatic consequences not only for the person himself, but for hundreds of people over several centuries. It is less about how one group

risers and falls and instead much more about violent societal transformations in a world trying to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances.

In examining how these changes were understood, *Poverty, Heresy, and the Apocalypse* illuminates two distinct trends regarding the thirteenth-century Order of Apostles and their inquisitorial opponents. First, by the time Dolcino had taken control of the Order after Segarelli's death, the group's own language reinforced their notion of special divine selection at the end of time; that is, they saw themselves as uniquely appointed by God to deliver a message of salvation before the coming apocalypse. Connected to this conviction were the concepts of persecution and martyrdom: they believed that there would be a certain contingent of people who would not only refuse to believe their message, but who would actively seek to destroy them. In their mind, these opponents were the enemies of God, collaborators with the devil and the Antichrist. The second trend appears in the rhetoric of these "opponents," that is, the more mainstream authorities within the church. Rival mendicants and especially inquisitors not only denounced the Order of Apostles as holding deviant religious beliefs, and thus as "heretics," but also emphasized their perceived egalitarianism, sexual immorality, and violence. These charges had an effect on both "heretics" and ecclesiastics alike. In the case of the Apostles, the accusations confirmed their belief that the church had forsaken its original, apostolic path and thereby strengthened their resolve to oppose it. For church authorities, these charges indicated that the Apostles were a clear and present danger that threatened the Christian community to its core and provoked a swift, merciless, and violent response. These are striking parallels with the language employed in 1993 by both the Branch Davidians and spokespersons for the FBI and other federal agencies.

The history of Segarelli, Dolcino, and the Order of Apostles is essential for understanding the medieval process of marginalization and violence that took place within the context of that society's attempts to establish normative practices in a climate of religious change. Similar trends can be found in modern apocalyptic movements like the Branch Davidians or Jim Jones' Peoples Temple. However, unlike secularized societies of today, medieval theological norms effectively determined the management of society as well as social priorities, so much so that some power elites, lay and ecclesiastical, used religion as a cover for their monopoly on power, land, and prestige. Therefore, religious threats and sociopolitical threats were not understood as separate, but rather as one indistinguishable menace. This lack of separation between religious and secular spheres created a climate where authorities not only tolerated but even actively encouraged the identification, marginalization, and extermination of certain "deviant" or "heretical" individuals who had turned their backs on traditional medieval Christian society by severing economic ties and inverting the social hierarchy. To this end, inquisitors and other ecclesiastical authorities essentially employed a template of "typical" heretical depravities, including sexual licentiousness and aberrations, general immorality, seditious behavior, and, perhaps

most importantly, a direct affiliation with the Devil. Taken together, these traits were made to appear to necessitate the removal of these so-called traitors to divine order and prevailing systems of justice by any means and at all costs.

It is important to understand that this process of labeling, or “othering,” at work in the Middle Ages was not unique to the period as its legacy persists into the modern era in the form of discrimination and violence based on ethnic, gender, and religious identifications. This legacy can clearly be seen in the historical similarities between the Order of Apostles and the Branch Davidians. Though separated by almost seven centuries, the rhetoric on the part of both their adversaries and the groups themselves as well as their subsequent actions indicate that the mixture of internal and external marginalization, apocalypticism, and persecution can lead to violence.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the work as a whole by providing a brief overview of the Order of Apostles, from their peaceful beginning under Segarelli in Parma in 1260 to their violent demise under Dolcino in Valsesia in 1307. This chapter looks at the typical historical treatment of the Apostles, which is most often derogatory, dismissive, and brief. In fact, such analyses are an impediment for understanding how the Order is, in fact, a perfect vehicle for examining the impact of drastic societal changes in Europe during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Chapter 2 covers the monumental changes to European society during the period from 1000–1250 that transformed it from relatively isolated pockets of “civilization” to an interconnected and international system. These changes include the medieval commercial revolution, the resurgence of trade (especially international trade), and the role of Italy as a cultural crossroad not only between European states but also between Europe and the Muslim and Byzantine East. Of critical importance is the change to a cash economy that, in many cities, led to visible displays of ostentatious wealth on the part of some, while clearly highlighting the growing gap between the rich and the poor.

Chapter 3 explores how the changes in the medieval economy coincided with drastic changes in the political landscape of western Europe, particularly in Italy. The rise of centralized states and monarchies created institutions with far-reaching powers to tax, to levy trade tariffs, and to wage warfare among the emerging kingdoms, which affected all levels of society. At the same time that secular kingdoms were consolidating their power, the Roman Church began to assert its status as a leading player on the political field, sometimes allying with the new kingdoms, but more often than not engaging these states as rivals, diplomatically at first, but quite frequently with force of arms. The most significant rivalry in Italy, at least in terms of this current study, occurred between the factions supporting the papacy and those supporting the German (Holy Roman) Emperor, a rivalry that pitted not only cities against one another, but often families as well. This involvement in politics on the part of the church was something that its critics, especially Dolcino, would later point to as a sign of corruption.

Chapter 4 covers the church's response to both the rivalry with secular kingdoms and charges of corruption. Beginning with the Gregorian Reforms of the mid-eleventh century, the papacy sought to improve the church's moral standing and competence in part because many of its members (especially priests) had acquired their positions via family or political ties, sometimes without any theological training whatsoever. In many ways this reform from above, which sought to purge undesirable elements from the church's ranks, inadvertently drew attention to ecclesiastical failings and planted the seeds among many of the laity that reform was a necessary, and encouraged, part of Christian life. Unfortunately for the church, many believed that the reforms had not gone far enough, especially concerning ecclesiastical wealth.

Chapter 5 begins by examining alternative, popular solutions to the anxiety created by the changes in Europe. This period saw the rise of poverty movements in Europe, such as the Waldensians and Cathars, which often began as supplements to traditional ecclesiastical structure and practice, particularly for the laity. They often originated as orthodox movements and only later came to be considered heretical, in part because their poverty and austerity became an open challenge to ecclesiastical wealth. It then follows the impact of the *vita apostolica* on Gerard Segarelli of Parma and his decision to lead a life of poverty in imitation of the original Apostles. His asceticism soon attracted followers from all over Italy who likewise saw the *vita apostolica* as the surest means of personal piety. Although he established no official rule for his group, their communal lifestyle had considerable appeal to both the citizens of Parma and many members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Of particular importance is the membership of the Order of Apostles, which included a broad cross section of Italian society, from peasants to nobles, many of whom were women. In fact, the Order spawned an all-female, itinerant branch known as the Apostolic Sisters, which received direct Episcopal support, further increasing the group's popularity and numbers. Moreover, unlike the Waldensians and Cathars, Segarelli's Apostles avoided the label of heresy throughout the remainder of the thirteenth century, a testament to both their orthodoxy and lack of attacks on ecclesiastical wealth.

Chapter 6 delves into the local response in Parma to the successful growth of Segarelli's Apostles, in particular the outrage expressed by the Franciscan, Salimbene de Adam of Parma. Examining Salimbene's chronicle (one of the few eyewitness sources for this period) reveals an intense disdain on his part, as he saw the Apostles as illegitimate usurpers of the ideal of apostolic poverty. Or perhaps, more accurately, Salimbene considered Segarelli a rival in terms of popular support, patronage, and donations. He alleged everything from sexual impropriety with female members, to homosexuality and pedophilia. Salimbene's intentional mischaracterization of the Apostles as illiterate and scandalous rustics not only helped sway ecclesiastical opinion against the group but also helped cement the negative narrative of the Order's history that has remained virtually unchanged up to the present day.

Chapter 7 follows the impact of both Salimbene's slander and the changing political climate in Parma that ultimately led to a souring of the relationship between Segarelli and prominent members of the church hierarchy. With the removal of the bishop of Parma who had served as a patron, Segarelli lost the ecclesiastical support that had protected him from his Franciscan rivals. This loss of support also coincided with the hardening of the church's position against "unauthorized" religious groups and Segarelli's refusal to disband his Apostles, resulting first in his imprisonment and ultimately in his execution.

Chapter 8 examines how Segarelli's shocking death stunned his followers, none more so than Fra Dolcino, who interpreted the execution as a sign that the Roman Church had become thoroughly corrupt and an institution of evil. Dolcino, now the leader of a radicalized group of the Apostles, developed his apocalyptic theology that pitted the pious Apostles against a corrupt church in what he determined were the final days before the cataclysmic Last Judgment. His apocalypticism attracted many followers who also saw the perceived worldliness and aggression of the Roman Church as signs of its corruption and impending collapse, allowing them to see their group of Apostles as the only true inheritor of Christ's message.

Chapter 9 discusses Dolcino's flight to his native Valsesia, a strategic location that would aid him and his followers because of the political turmoil there. For decades, the fiercely independent small communities of Valsesia had been engaged in a protracted struggle for autonomy from feudal control that had been exerted over them by nobles known as the Biandrate and their supporters, the various bishops of the cities of Novara and Vercelli. This opposition often took the form of violent rebellion, which ultimately resulted in their relative autonomy just a few decades prior to Dolcino's arrival. However, just as the church reasserted its control over dissident religious movements in general, it and its feudal allies sought to abolish Valsesian independence. Thus when Dolcino arrived with his rhetoric of church greed and corruption, the stage was set in Valsesia for a perfect storm of religious and political rebellion. Although Dolcino's apocalypticism was of little interest to the Valsesians, his advocacy of opposing the church encouraged the Valsesians to take up arms to protect the Apostles and defend them from a veritable onslaught of crusaders.

The Epilogue looks at how the story of Gerard Segarelli and the Order of Apostles did not end with the gruesome death of Dolcino in 1307. After Dante immortalized the heretic in his *Divine Comedy*, the movement's history was appropriated by both detractors, who thought the dangerous Order had been rightfully eliminated, and admirers, who saw in Dolcino precursors of their own political struggles. To this day in Valsesia one can find numerous monuments to Dolcino and the Apostles, from eponymous road signs to memorial plaques, all indications that the tumultuous history of the Order has had a lingering influence even 700 years after its demise.

Tell Fra Dolcino to Prepare Himself

For all his contributions to Italian language and culture, one thing Dante Alighieri is not usually acknowledged for is the immortalizing of an obscure heretical sect called the Order of the Apostles that might have remained “lost” had it not been for six lines penned in the first quarter of the fourteenth century in his *Divine Comedy*:

Then you, who will perhaps soon see the sun,
tell Fra Dolcino, if he has no desire
to join me here quickly,
to provide himself with food
lest when the snows besiege him,
it bring the Novarese the victory that otherwise they would not find too easy.¹

Dante placed this warning in the mouth of the Prophet Muhammad, who himself was suffering eternal torment among the sowers of schism and scandal in the eighth circle of hell. Muhammad’s warning was directed to a fellow schismatic and declared heretic, Dolcino of Novara, who, at the time of Dante’s writing, was fighting a losing battle against an army of papal crusaders in the Italian Alps, north of Vercelli. Dante’s mention of Dolcino preserved at least some memory of this heretical group in a work that would become a classic in the western literary tradition.

Despite his immortality in the *Divine Comedy*, if you were to ask virtually any medievalist about Fra Dolcino and his followers, you may be met with a blank stare. Until, that is, you connect Fra Dolcino to Umberto Eco’s novel, *The Name of the Rose* or the 1986 movie of the same name starring Sean Connery and Christian Slater. Then the response is typically, “Oh, *those* heretics.” This response is based on a view of Dolcino and the Order of Apostles (also known as the Apostolics, the Pseudo-Apostles, or the Dolcinites) that has suffered from inquisitorial bias and some poetic license for sensationalism. If one were to follow Umberto Eco’s vivid descriptions of the vile heretic in his novel, one would conclude that these heretics were nothing more than rabble-rousing, bloodthirsty cutthroats, hiding behind a veil of feigned sanctity. Accordingly, the story of Dolcino is “the story of a man who did insane things,” who “committed many acts of violence,” a story

that “teaches how the love of penance and the desire to purify the world can produce bloodshed and slaughter.”² Dolcino and his Apostles “burned and looted because [they] had proclaimed poverty the universal law,” and they “killed to punish, to purify the impure through blood.” They even “had to kill the innocent as well; . . . to establish justice and happiness [they] had to shed a little blood.”³ Although Eco’s rendering of Dolcino and his followers is grossly exaggerated (he simply took ecclesiastical and inquisitorial documents at face value), his interpretation is merely one in a long line of misconceptions about the origins, mission, and significance of the Order of Apostles.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Order of Apostles originated in 1260 in Parma, after Gerard Segarelli, a seemingly illiterate peasant who was inspired to follow the apostolic life, was denied entrance into the Franciscan Order. Not letting this setback stop him, Segarelli followed his own path, let his beard and hair grow long, clothed himself in a rough, woolen habit (strikingly similar to the Franciscan attire), then sold all his belongings and gave the money away. Segarelli began to wander about Parma and the surrounding area, exhorting his listeners to embrace the twin ideals of poverty and penance with his famous cry of *penitençágite*, a vernacular variant on the Latin phrase *penitentiam agite* (“Do ye penance!”). He soon attracted a number of followers, both men and women, often of high social standing, and the Order grew and spread throughout central and northern Italy. It even enjoyed the support of prominent bishops in Parma, Ravenna, and other Italian cities. For close to 40 years, the Order prospered and grew, but Segarelli refused to take a leadership role in the movement, which may have allowed some of his followers enough independence to develop a notion that their apostolic way of life was not only biblically sanctioned, but in fact superior to that of other ecclesiastics, especially the Franciscans, who had become visibly wealthy and elitist. Under later inquisitorial questioning, some members of the Order admitted that while the Franciscans were referred to as *fraters minores* (lesser brothers) the Apostles called themselves *fraters minimi* (the least brothers), indicating the extent to which they saw themselves as a purer example of apostolic holiness.

It was through their claim to the “mantle” of the original apostles, the righteousness and piety exhibited by Jesus’ earliest disciples, that the Order saw itself as the true heir to the legacy of Jesus, first as an alternative to the Roman Church and later as a successor. Ideas such as these inevitably led to conflict with ecclesiastical authorities who first attempted to pressure the Order to disband and seek admission with other “established” Orders. When this “encouragement” failed, Pope Nicholas IV placed a papal ban on the Apostles and began an inquisitorial

process against them to get to the bottom of their beliefs. The result was the arrest, imprisonment, and even execution of some members for disobedience. The turning point in the Order's history came with the arrest and deposition of Segarelli who, refusing to renounce his adherence to the ideals of poverty, was burnt as a heretic in July 1300.

The increasing hostility of ecclesiastical authorities accelerated the growing conviction among members of the Order that the authority that had been conferred upon the church by Christ was now utterly void. According to the Apostles, the church was no longer a useful institution, having moved too far beyond its original functions. Since the pope and his cardinals, and even the mendicant orders, had strayed from the apostolic ideal of the primitive church, the Apostles did not believe themselves subject to ecclesiastical censure. Following Norman Cohn's assertion that institutional persecution fosters apocalypticism in marginalized groups, the trials and subsequent execution of members of the Order of Apostles, including its founder Gerard Segarelli, stimulated the group's latent apocalyptic mentality.⁴ Going beyond its self-legitimization through its claimed association with Christ and his apostles, the Order also placed itself in an apocalyptic time frame that further validated, in its members own minds, its rebellious actions defending the faithful from a church that they designated an agent of Antichrist.

Rather than fading away, the Order of Apostles came under the leadership of Fra Dolcino, a charismatic visionary who eventually preached violent rebellion against a church he saw as oppressive and morally bankrupt. Convinced that the Roman Church had become corrupt precisely because of its political power, wealth, and apparent desire for total dominance, Dolcino wrote a series of three letters to his followers, beginning in 1300, which claimed that this corruption was a key sign that the apocalypse was near. His radical stance naturally earned him the ire of the church, which responded with inquisitorial proceedings. Fueled by his apocalyptic visions pitting good versus evil, Dolcino fled from his perceived persecution, first in Parma, then in Trent, and finally in his native Valsesia. It was there that Dolcino ultimately instigated an armed revolt against the church which lasted several years and required a series of crusades to be put down. Most of his followers were killed in the ensuing battles, while Dolcino and the key leaders of the movement were captured, brutally tortured, and then finally executed in 1307.

Research on Dolcino, especially since the late nineteenth century, has typically been far more cursory than the previous summary. In fact, it often relies on, and indeed perpetuates, stereotypes similar to those found in Eco's fictional treatment. In doing so, these authors routinely gloss over the overwhelmingly peaceful nature of the Apostles (under both Segarelli and Dolcino) and instead focus on the group's violent demise, an approach that leaves many aspects of this group

unexamined and unexplained, particularly its members' fervent belief in absolute class and gender equality. Academic carelessness has not been the only impediment to understanding the history of the Order. Ideologically driven histories abound, from the rationalistic nineteenth-century historian Henry Charles Lea to the Marxist approach of S. D. Skaskin in the mid-twentieth century.⁵ Analyses such as these often place the movement within a specific context that minimizes some aspects, such as Segarelli's genuine piety, or unnecessarily concentrates on others, such as Dolcino's violent preaching. Fortunately for the study of the history of the Order of Apostles, some solid scholarship does exist, most notably by the Italian scholars Raniero Orioli, Grado Merlo, and Corrado Mornese.

ORIGINAL BIAS

Many accounts of the Order of Apostles have relied uncritically on the earliest and, perhaps, most slanted sources of evidence, the late thirteenth-century *Cronica* of Salimbene of Parma (a Franciscan chronicler, and rival, from the same town as Segarelli), the eyewitness, anonymous *Historia fratris Dulcini heresiarche*, and the early fourteenth-century *De secta illorum qui se dicunt esse de Ordine Apostolorum* of Bernard Gui, a Dominican inquisitor in Toulouse.⁶ These texts present the closest thing to firsthand accounts for the origins, spread, and destruction of the Order. The main reason that these texts pose a problem for the history of the Order is that all three have been quoted nearly verbatim. Thus their authors' biases have remained intact, preserved through the centuries, and embedded in their narratives.

Salimbene's negative portrayal of the early years of the Apostles and their founder stems from his own privileged standing within the established Franciscan order. Salimbene saw the success of the Order of Apostles as a direct threat to his own because the widespread communal support that the Apostles received indicated that the community likely valued them more than the Franciscans, a consequence, by the mid-thirteenth century, of the extent to which Francis' followers had deviated from his original conception of his order. More importantly, such community support meant that Segarelli's Order received donations that Salimbene believed would otherwise have come to the Franciscans. Salimbene's hostility to the "upstart" Segarelli therefore colored his portrayal of the group's origin and thus the *Cronica* presents the founder of the Apostles as a bumbling and illiterate peasant, devoid of any authentic religious fervor, who naively thinks that he can imitate both St Francis and the Apostles without any formal education. Salimbene's history of the early years of the Order of Apostles unjustly stigmatizes both the Order and especially Segarelli as misguided rural fools who engage in absurd literalist biblical recreations because they are too ignorant to know any

better.⁷ Based on such intramendicant rivalry, Salimbene's contribution must be seen as an inaccurate, even malicious, characterization of the Apostles that must be filtered of invective to discern a more accurate history of Segarelli's Order. Yet, later scholarship has overwhelmingly and uncritically relied upon Salimbene's partisan account, continually presenting his biases regarding the Order as fact. Such accounts have thus singled out the rural, uneducated, and spontaneous elements that then represent the Apostles as uneducated imposters.

A similar firsthand account is the anonymous *Historia fratris Dulcini heresiarche*, written during and immediately after the capture and execution of Dolcino in 1307. The title's reference to Dolcino as a "heresiarch" clearly indicates the *Historia's* openly partisan nature. He colors his narrative with prejudicial terms, calling the Apostles' deeds "abominable and heinous" and their teachings "accursed and in every way contrary to the norm of orthodox faith," while the Apostles themselves he calls "pestiferous dogs."⁸ These stigmatizations occur regularly throughout the work. Like Salimbene, the author of the *Historia*, referred to as l'Anonimo Sincrono (literally, the Contemporary Anonymous), was someone who favored the status quo of ecclesiastical hegemony and felt directly threatened by the beliefs and actions of the Apostles who, he feared, sought to overturn the ruling hierarchy. The *Historia* repeatedly states that Dolcino promoted false doctrines in the hopes of luring good Christians away from the faith and to promote his own wicked agenda. Whereas Salimbene referred to Segarelli and his followers as fools and fornicators, the Anonimo Sincrono describes Dolcino's Apostles as threats to society, as demonic dogs stalking and infecting their prey with heresy. Additionally, the *Historia* exaggerates not only the number of Dolcino's followers while in Valsesia, but also their actions, by relating tales of Apostles plundering and rampaging up and down the valleys, laying waste to anything and anyone in their path. These contemporary descriptions account, in part, for the negative and inaccurate portrayal of the Apostles as violent that is found in the works of many later historians.

The third widely quoted source for the history of the Apostles is the inquisitorial record collected by the Dominican inquisitor Bernard Gui, *De secta illorum qui se dicunt esse de Ordine Apostolorum* ("The Sect of Those Who Say They Are Apostles"). This history of the Order, which mostly chronicles the apocalyptic thought and rebellion of Dolcino, is an inherently hostile source, penned by one who was sworn to defend the Catholic faith against the diabolical influence of heretics. Writing at least a decade after Dolcino's execution in 1307, Gui collected three of Dolcino's letters, a series of papal bulls and a possible eyewitness account, and then added his own summary of the group's rise and fall. Gui's history repeats Salimbene's charge that Segarelli was an illiterate peasant, accuses Dolcino of being the bastard son of a priest from Novara, highlights Dolcino's apocalyptic ideology as the basis for the violence of the Order's rebellion, and

ultimately promotes the notion that, from their foundation, the Apostles were bent on heresy, disobedience, and bloodshed. Like Salimbene, many historians have problematically used Gui, often taking his charges of violence and bloodlust at face value. Despite the obvious setback of having such slanted evidence, each of these three sources can provide useful information regarding the development of the Apostles' unique ideology, if one properly filters out the bias and invective.

However, academic works too often have unquestioningly presented the information from the *Cronica*, the *Historia*, and *De secta* as established fact. As such, most treatments of the history of the Order of the Apostles have erred in at least one of the following categories. The first area concerns origins, both the physical birth of the two major leaders, Segarelli and Dolcino, as well as the birth or foundation of the Order itself. The second category of misrepresentation is the group's perceived violent political agenda and aggressive apocalyptic theology under Dolcino that led directly to armed and bloody revolt.

IGNOBLE ORIGINS

Discussions of the Order of Apostles generally begin by emphasizing Segarelli's illiteracy and Dolcino's bastardy. These assumptions have effectively characterized the Order as a misguided popular movement that was not only simplistic (Segarelli's apparently low social standing) but also illegitimate (Dolcino's father supposedly being a priest). Such characterizations have often led to a dismissive, sometimes even disdainful, presentation of the Order that actually serves the intent of the original chroniclers such as Salimbene and Gui. Moreover, when eminent medieval historians promote these misconceptions, they become further entrenched in the historiography.

The most prominent example of this misrepresentation comes from the American historian Henry Charles Lea who, in 1887, published his massive three-volume study, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*. Though dated, Lea's work still stands as a major reference for the study of the medieval inquisition in part because of its painstakingly thorough examination of medieval jurisprudence and proceedings as well as the documents he uncovered and published in the notes and appendices of his work during the course of his research.⁹ Despite the monumental nature of his work, Lea's *Inquisition* lacks impartiality. Lea's study arose, in part, from his apparent disgust with the medieval church and on more than one occasion he pointed out its many perceived failings, foremost of which was its repression of intellectual freedom.¹⁰ Lea also claimed that the church hunted down and exterminated individuals for persisting in "some trifling error of belief" in the name of God, while "in the same holy name the orthodox could purchase absolution for the vilest of crimes for a few coins."¹¹ As for the inquisition itself,

he saw it as a “standing mockery of justice—perhaps the most iniquitous that the arbitrary cruelty of man has ever devised.”¹² Lea also believed that all the “misery and wrong” inflicted on the “defenseless” up to his own day could be “directly traced to the arbitrary and unrestricted methods introduced by the Inquisition.”¹³ He summed up his negative opinion in the last lines of his study of inquisitional development, noting that the medieval inquisition “might well seem the invention of demons and was fitly characterized . . . as the Road to Hell.”¹⁴

A similar prejudice is his stigmatization of medieval Christians as superstitious and unenlightened. Lea considered medievals “[u]naccustomed to restraint,” subject to “[t]hrills of delirious emotion,” and perpetually mired in “the deep and hopeless misery which oppressed the mass of the people.”¹⁵ Medieval society was in a “deplorable” condition, presumably in comparison to Lea’s own “modern” age, and savagely “ground under the iron heel of feudalism.”¹⁶ Partly due to these miserable conditions, and partly because of their subjugation by both “Church and State,” Lea determined the medieval population to be “impressionable, emotional, and superstitious, slowly awakening in the intellectual dawn.”¹⁷ Lea’s less than flattering characterization of the medieval laity, coupled with his highly judgmental presentation of the inquisition, influenced his presentation of both the judicial process and of those caught up in the proceedings, the so-called heretics themselves.

The Order of Apostles fits nicely into Lea’s preconceived notions regarding the illiterate medievals. Reciting almost verbatim the description of Gerard Segarelli in Salimbene’s *Cronica*, and without undertaking any independent analysis, Lea immediately stigmatizes Segarelli as of “low extraction, uncultured and stupid,” a youth who “vainly” applied to the Franciscans but instead, upon his rejection, “passed his days vacantly musing” in the Franciscan church.¹⁸ In fact, Lea never seems to diverge from Salimbene’s account at all, except by adding in his own prejudiced assessment of Segarelli’s motives as “gregarious enthusiasm” responding to the “impulse of the moment.”¹⁹ Lea could not imagine Segarelli, as an illiterate layman, having genuine religious sentiments, and therefore takes Salimbene’s presentation as established fact. Nor does he stray at all from Gui’s assembly of inquisitorial records regarding Dolcino, stating that Dolcino’s paternity can be traced to Giulio, a priest from Novara.²⁰ In this rendering, Dolcino is presented as a charismatic, possibly megalomaniacal, prophet whose “lightest word was law,” and whose followers were so “inflamed with religious zeal” that they became openly defiant and actively violent, plundering, raiding, and desecrating the land, until they were slaughtered.²¹ Aside from a few remarks as to the zealousness or superstition of the Apostles, Lea’s account is often nothing more than a translation of source material, complete with orthodox, prejudicial stereotypes. Lea’s apparent refusal to acknowledge the biased nature of his sources ultimately serves to reinforce his own bias that Segarelli could not possibly have known what

he was doing and that Dolcino's illegitimate birth might be partly responsible for his ecclesiastical antagonism. Hardly a critical, textual analysis, Lea's depiction of the Order of Apostles established a standard, yet imperfect, history that later historians would themselves perpetuate.

Gordon Leff, Marjorie Reeves, and Malcolm Lambert are among those who have repeated Lea's uncritical parroting of Salimbene and Gui. In his 1967 history, *Heresy in the later Middle Ages*, Leff emphasizes both Segarelli's illiterate background as well as Dolcino's illegitimacy, which apparently supports his conclusion that the Order was an anomalous incident. Leff, who also mixes up the names of Segarelli and Dolcino, dismisses the Order of Apostles, asserting that the Order was "of no lasting importance" and, compared to other heretical groups that existed for a much longer period of time, such as the Cathars and Waldensians, was "merely a ripple on the surface."²² Incredibly, Leff makes this dismissive argument right after he explains that the group spread across Europe to France, Spain, and Germany, thriving for at least another century, and right before he notes the Order's immortality in the pages of Dante.

Marjorie Reeves, likewise, in her otherwise complex study of the impact of Joachite prophecy on both orthodox and heterodox movements, unquestioningly takes Salimbene's slur against Segarelli that he was illiterate, an idiot, and stupid, as the truth.²³ However, Segarelli's beliefs were less important to her than comparing eschatologies and she in fact provides a compelling evaluation of Dolcino's deviation from Joachim's Trinitarian apocalyptic schemes. Significantly, Reeves effectively demonstrated that Dolcino's departure from Joachim, in the form of anticlericalism as well as in a separate periodization of history, was "an original variant" on Joachite ideas.²⁴ Although Reeves provided new insight into Dolcino's apocalypticism, it was still based on a narrative that emphasized ignoble origins, thus throwing into question the overall legitimacy of the Order and the motivation of its members.

Even Malcolm Lambert, whose *Medieval heresy* has gone through multiple editions and was last revised in 2002, repeats wholesale Lea's, and thus Salimbene's and Gui's, history of Segarelli and Dolcino, which reinforces the false premise that the Order's leaders were either ill-suited or misguided in their attempts at ecclesiastical and spiritual reform.²⁵ Lambert's discussion of Dolcino fits into his larger analysis of popular heretical movements that diverged from their more orthodox counterparts, such as the Spiritual Franciscans. Though incorrectly equating the Apostles with these reform-minded Franciscans, Lambert effectively illustrates that Dolcino's heresy was in fact partly a response to perceived abuses by ecclesiastical authorities. Nevertheless, although it contains revised sections on Catharism and has even updated the historiographical debate questioning the validity of eleventh-century accusations of heresy, Lambert's new edition fails to revise any of his evaluations of the Apostles, despite the publication of numerous

Italian monographs, some of which existed even prior to the second edition. This critical oversight in an important work used by both students and scholars leads to further error.

Similarly, Eugen Weber's *Apocalypses: Prophecies, Cults, and Millennial Beliefs Through the Ages*, published in 1999, perpetuates falsehoods regarding the Order. Written more as an encyclopedic list of apocalyptic prophecies, Weber's quarter-page discussion of the Order reads as a condensed version of Lea's history, coming as it does in a chapter entitled, "In Dark and Bloody Times." Here, instead of repeating the typical "bastard son of a priest" lineage of Dolcino, Weber fancies him an "extremist dropout of the Spiritual Franciscans" who preached the abolition of property "and probably of marriage as well."²⁶ There is, however, no citation or reference to support these claims. In his case, anyone preaching poverty in the fourteenth century must be a Spiritual Franciscan, despite the fact that the Spirituals were an entirely different group based *within* the established mendicant order.²⁷ The notion that Dolcino preached the abolition of marriage for reasons of personal, sexual satisfaction appears to be a wrongly applied reading of Salimbene, which assumed that Segarelli's communal sharing of goods extended to sharing women as well. In any case, these accusations serve to undermine the validity of the Order not only by challenging the ability of Dolcino to lead effectively but also by insinuating that his "reform" was nothing more than a sham to conceal his own sexual desires.²⁸

Another historian who slights the Apostles based on their "questionable" origins can be found in the otherwise-excellent *Power and imagination: City-states in Renaissance Italy* by Lauro Martines. Unlike most of the other works discussed here, Martines's book is not an overt treatment of heresy, but rather an analysis of the materialism of Renaissance Italy and the central importance during that period of displays of power in the form of artistic and cultural endeavors. Yet, in his brief discussion of heretical enthusiasm, Martines perpetuates the image of Segarelli as a lower class incompetent by offhandedly dismissing the reformer as one of many "excitable men" who had "sprung from the lower ranks of society."²⁹ Martines presents these religious enthusiasts as responding to the "rush of political and social energies" taking place within the urban context of northern Italy, characterizing them as "dramatic" in light of more reasonable contemplatives, such as the Anonimo Genovese, who wrote moralizing poetry, or even simply moderate citizens who participated in regulated religious confraternities.³⁰ Martines's discussion of heresy, and of Segarelli in particular, delegitimizes the poor as peripheral in importance compared to higher-ranking individuals such as Francis of Assisi.³¹ By labeling Segarelli as "excitable," Martines creates doubt as to the authenticity and sincerity of Segarelli's convictions regarding poverty. Moreover, by claiming that Segarelli and other potential heretics "sprang" from the lower classes, Martines not only limits the movement

to the lower class, he also implies that Segarelli's movement was simply spontaneous, a base, impulsive, and unthinking reaction to events around him. Such reasoning only serves to further obscure Segarelli behind the complicated veil already erected by Salimbene.

Although their efforts have been almost entirely overlooked by English-speaking historians, over the last 50 years Italian scholars have made significant contributions to the study of Segarelli, Dolcino, and the Apostles that have overturned many previously held conclusions.³² Foremost among these scholars has been Raniero Orioli who first shed new light on the history of the Order in 1984 with his work, *Dolcino: Nascita, vita e morte di un'eresiarca medievale*. Although relatively short, Orioli's work uncovered previously unknown or forgotten treatments of and references to Dolcino among a variety of medieval authors, including Benvenuto da Imola's *Commentary on the Divine comedy*, thus opening up new source material.³³

In his more exhaustive follow up, *Venit perfidus heresiarcha: Il movimento Apostolico-Dolciniano dal 1260 al 1307*, Orioli challenged the widespread assumption that Dolcino was the illegitimate son of a priest. Unlike most treatments of Dolcino, which take at face value the phrase "*Dulcinus, filius presbyteri Iulii*" ("Dolcino, son of the priest, Julio"), Orioli took the time to discover that "Presbyteri" (also Presbitero, Presbiteri, or Preve) was actually an old family name from the region near Vercelli. In fact, many members of this notable family had been involved in the local ecclesiastical hierarchy for generations, serving as bishops, deacons, and cardinals, but it is entirely possible that Dolcino was the son of a lay member of the family.³⁴ In addition to questioning the long-held belief regarding the paternity of Dolcino, Orioli's work created the first complete list of individuals, both men and women, who were in any way related to or part of the Order of Apostles, providing the first substantial glimpse at the group's membership beyond the allegations found in Salimbene. Additionally, Orioli has been able to fill in the gap in historical knowledge regarding the transitional period of the Apostles, between Segarelli's execution and Dolcino's open assumption of leadership, by documenting Dolcino's itinerant preaching and letter writing from Parma to Trent, and then ultimately to Valsesia.³⁵ Orioli's conclusions, confirmed by other Italian historians such as Corrado Mornese and Gustavo Buratti, have revolutionized the study of Dolcino and the Apostles, at least in Italy, by refuting and even overturning the biases and stereotypes that have persisted since the fourteenth century.

VIOLENT INTENTIONS

The second misperception of the Order of Apostles portrays them as revolutionaries actively seeking to overthrow the current social order by violence. In

fact, many references to the Order's activities, especially during the period from 1300 to 1307, charge Dolcino and the Apostles with hunting down and murdering the rich and the noble to further their revolutionary and apocalyptic aims. Treatments of the Apostles that advance this violent presentation, like those that cite the ignoble origins of the Order, often do so because they follow the Franciscan and Dominican sources. Portraying the group as violent, and therefore requiring extermination, served the ends of the inquisitors; thus, such assertions should no longer be accepted uncritically. In most cases, modern references to Segarelli, Dolcino, and the Apostles tend to imply that the violent, revolutionary "agenda" of the group was a constant factor in its origin, propagation, and demise. Though many treatments link only the group's later apocalypticism to its revolutionary actions, their implied violence has often dominated most discussions of their history.³⁶ These simplistic views of the Apostles tend to treat the development and propagation of the Order as an historical constant. That is, they claim that the radical ideology of Dolcino was present, or at least latent, among members even before Dolcino assumed leadership when, in fact, the earlier apocalypticism was not concerned with outwardly directed violence. Even those authors who appear to admire the Order's progressive social ideals, especially those writing from a Marxist perspective, have perpetuated the myth of violence, albeit to different ends than the early inquisitors.

The personal political views of individual historians have often played a role in their writing of history, at times altering the historical record by influencing what elements of any given history are included or overlooked. Many Marxist historians, from the Soviet Union to East Germany to China, have found in Dolcino an early example of the struggle of the underclass against overwhelming odds or the seeds of later peasant and proletariat revolts. Moreover, the communal and antimaterialist society established by Segarelli and perpetuated by Dolcino seems to fit into an ideology that promotes a communist utopia. A similar trend among Marxists is the notion that, in the clash of ideologies, violence is not only inevitable but also desirable if it is aimed at overthrowing the current, repressive order. Such presuppositions in the minds of historians "force" historical actors, such as Dolcino or members of the church, into behavior representing attitudes that they did not have. The problem with this assumption is that there was no hint of violent ideology in the Order's origins under Segarelli, confirmed by none other than the group's arch-critic, Salimbene. In fact, the possibility of violence only surfaced after the arrival of Dolcino and his apocalyptic rhetoric, 40 years after the foundation of the Order.

Writing at the very end of the nineteenth century, Antonio Labriola, an Italian socialist, interpreted Dolcino's uprising as an economic revolt that was not only part of what he terms a long-term "plebeian peasant" uprising against the church, but also an indication of the "inevitability" of Communism.³⁷ Labriola takes care,

however, to note that there was indeed a religious underpinning to Dolcino's movement, characterizing it as "one of those apocalyptic returns to a purely evangelical Christianity" that was "reinforced by an apostolic ardour."³⁸ Yet, Labriola's socialist views led him to interpret Dolcino's religious beliefs as simply a veneer, a veil, beneath which lay the heretic's real agenda: a social revolution against the materialistic hierarchy of the church by the "precociously modern," medieval proletariat.³⁹ Here Labriola's socialist ideology appears to diminish the centrality of the Order's religiosity, their apostolicism and apocalypticism, in favor of more exclusively economic and social factors, so that the Order's initial religious motivations became, in fact, secularized. That is not to say that such factors were irrelevant to the Apostles but that, in Labriola's view, they perceived ecclesiastical corruption as part of a larger class struggle, and not through an apostolic lens that conceived of it as primarily apocalyptic and religious. Though he acknowledged the element of apostolicism under Dolcino, Labriola apparently neglected Segarelli's contribution to this "ardor" of the Order's ideology, presumably preferring to focus on the revolutionary agenda of Dolcino. Labriola's presentation, therefore, discounts the group's religious ideology in order to emphasize its social program and its revolutionary activities and, implicitly, to elevate the Apostles as an example for his contemporary readers.⁴⁰

A direct consequence of Labriola's teleological approach highlighting the Order's (apparently) violent opposition to the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the rich while suppressing their more peaceful (and less radical) origins, is that it replicates the near-exclusive focus of medieval inquisitors on violence and armed rebellion.⁴¹ Nevertheless, Labriola's analysis offers significant insight into the cultural context of Dolcino's "revolt" by drawing attention to the unsettled economic and social conditions of northern Italy's Valsesia region. Though Labriola did not distinguish between the armed Valsesians revolting against both lords and bishops and the Apostles taking shelter in their midst, his concern with this revolutionary process sheds light on why some medieval Italians would willingly support the Apostles' cause beyond simply religious motivation.⁴²

Similarly, S. D. Skaskin's *Le condizioni storiche della rivolta di Dolcino*, written in Moscow near the height of Cold War animosity in 1955, attempts to explain Dolcino's "revolt" by placing it in the wider context of peasant and proletariat uprisings across Europe from the fourteenth century onward. By labeling the Order's actions after 1304 as a "revolt," Skaskin implicates the movement's leadership in intentional, open, presumably armed rebellion in northern Italy. Moreover, by focusing exclusively on the final years of Dolcino's leadership, Skaskin intentionally sidelines the decades of peaceful coexistence between the Apostles under Segarelli and ecclesiastical authorities out of preference for the Order's violent, but defensive, last stand. In fact, many of the Order's main tenets,

such as following the *vita apostolica* for reasons of piety, are omitted in Skaskin's discussion in favor of a single-minded focus on Dolcino's revolt against the "capitalist" ventures of the church.⁴³

Though there was a certain amount of hostility on the part of Dolcino against some sections of the clergy, Skaskin's insistence on analyzing Dolcino's ideology as purely economic fails to consider the very real religious and apocalyptic elements of his thought. This exclusive emphasis on economic factors fits into Skaskin's Marxist viewpoint through which he contends that the Order of Apostles' heresy was simply one of a series of lower-class uprisings directed against the "bourgeois" clerics that sought to fleece the oppressed peasants.⁴⁴ Upon closer examination, such an interpretation does not hold up in the face of evidence that clearly indicates that the Order's ranks were filled by men and women from all classes and economic backgrounds.⁴⁵ That is not to say, of course, that economic ideology was absent from the Order of Apostles, for the economic status of ecclesiastics as well as class status within the wider feudal society fueled, in part, both Segarelli's and Dolcino's apostolicism. Moreover, Skaskin's economic focus provides a useful model of analysis that actually illustrates the nuanced nature of the Order's ideology as a complex mix of both economics and theology, provided one does not eclipse the other.

In addition to assuming that the Order was bent on violent rebellion since its foundation, Skaskin's interpretation limits Dolcino's heresy to one of social equality, virtually devoid of any theological underpinnings.⁴⁶ Although the Order of Apostles arose in part as a consequence of the changing economy of the high Middle Ages, by styling their revolt as purely economic and class-based, Skaskin provides an incomplete and inaccurate history that reveals more about his own Marxist ideology than it does about the Order itself.⁴⁷ Skaskin's approach has muddled the history of the Order by projecting backward onto the thirteenth-century anachronistic terms of analysis such as "bourgeois" and the less accurate "capitalist," making the Apostles and their opponents appear to be something they were not.

The most balanced treatment of the Order by a Marxist historian, that is, one that takes into account both religious and economic factors, can be found in Bernhard Töpfer's *Die Apostelbrüder und der Aufstand des Dolcino* and *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens: Zur Entwicklung Chiliasmischer Zukunftshoffnungen im Hochmittelalter*.⁴⁸ Though Töpfer's examination of the "Apostolic Brothers," as he calls them, tends to focus more on Dolcino and his apocalyptic theology concerning the coming kingdom, it does provide one of the more lucid discussions of Gerard Segarelli and the Order's foundation. Unlike many other Marxist historians, Töpfer does not characterize the Order's entire history as one that is violently opposed to the protocapitalistic feudal structure. Instead, Töpfer, like

Labriola, rightly situates Segarelli's movement as one of many during the Middle Ages that concerned itself with evangelical poverty.⁴⁹ In fact, Töpfer makes it clear that under the guidance of Segarelli, not only was the Order surprisingly nonviolent, considering its later rhetoric, its members also did not seek to break away from the church.⁵⁰

Töpfer's study is also unique in that it is one of the few analyses to take into account the biases of the source material, in this case Salimbene's rivalry with Segarelli and the Order. Most histories, especially those written by Marxists like Skaskin and Labriola, have uncritically adopted Salimbene's description of the membership of the Order—that they were exclusively rustic pig herders and commoners—as an indication that the Apostles were exclusively lower-class, disenfranchised, and bent on revolting against the feudal system. Töpfer, however, cautions against such a one-sided, and ideologically convenient, portrayal of the Order because it fails to consider Salimbene's partisanship, the Order's four decades of peaceful existence, and even Salimbene's own discussion of members from various classes, including the nobility.⁵¹

Das Kommende Reich is unique among Marxist histories of the Order in another way. Unlike Skaskin, who failed to detect the religious character of the Apostles' social actions, Töpfer contextualizes Dolcino's "revolt" as one grounded in apocalyptic fervor.⁵² Töpfer argues, in fact, that Dolcino presented a revolutionary agenda, and actively promoted it through itinerant preaching, but notes that the leader of the Order stopped short of advocating violent actions by its members. Instead, Töpfer clarifies that they believed that the coming emperor, Frederick III, and not the Apostles, would be the one to actively eradicate the prelates, clerics, and monks.⁵³ Although Dolcino's millennial ideas sought to promote peace, Töpfer points out the irony that in order to do so Dolcino ultimately threatened, but did not advocate, violence. For Töpfer, Dolcino's significance lies in his widely preaching a struggle against the hegemony of the church, one Dolcino saw as stifling individuality and corrupting spirituality, a struggle that would bring about a spiritual utopian paradise from the ruins of the current carnal and materialistic world.

Hoping to capitalize on the anxiety toward and interest in the apocalypse, the turn of the last millennium saw renewed interest in Dolcino's reputedly violent apocalyptic theology by authors who unleashed a torrent of books that repeated many of the same errors and misconceptions noted above.⁵⁴ An example of this trend can be found in Frederic J. Baumgartner's 1999 book, *Longing for the End: A History of Millennialism in Western Civilization*. After repeating the earlier notion that reforming groups were "invariably" anticlerical, and thus ultimately violent, Baumgartner not only goes on to perpetuate the erroneous statement that Dolcino was the son of a priest but even invents the idea that Dolcino's followers

“avoided all trappings of a religious order,” possibly as a result of their anticlericalism.⁵⁵ A casual reading of even Salimbene’s *Cronica* reveals the steps that the Apostles took in order to gain papal recognition, and thus legitimacy, as a religious order. Not surprisingly, Baumgartner also falls into the trap of vilifying Segarelli as “an illiterate, would-be Franciscan,” and yet also asserts that Segarelli was somehow familiar with the monastic prophecies of Joachim of Fiore, claiming “for his followers, and some Franciscans, the designation as Joachim’s new order of the third age.”⁵⁶ This argument asserts that Segarelli not only had direct knowledge of Joachim’s millennial theology, for which there is no evidence, but more importantly, that he actively and knowingly worked within Joachim’s apocalyptic timeframe, despite his lack of education. Baumgartner also states unequivocally that Dolcino’s followers would bring about a new age not only through their own apostolic poverty “but also through violence.”⁵⁷ Closely following the inquisitorial sources, he then claims that the Apostles were “terrorizing the region” noting that Dolcino declared the group had “the right to imprison or kill those who supported the established church and to destroy their towns and villages.”⁵⁸ Baumgartner’s treatment is indicative of the confused views that propagate regarding the Order’s prophetic violence, for during his own discussion of their *active* violence he correctly notes that the extermination of the pope and the rest of the clergy would be accomplished “through the agency of the last emperor,” Frederick III of Sicily.⁵⁹

A corrective to the violence-prone interpretations of Dolcino’s final years in Valsesia can be found in the numerous Italian authors who have provided a more nuanced understanding of the volatile political and religious climate that the Apostles found themselves in around 1305. Historians such as Alberto Bossi and Grado Merlo were some of the first to acknowledge that, far from being a tranquil valley of bucolic utopia, Valsesia was in fact a region that had been embroiled in violent territorial disputes well before Dolcino’s arrival.⁶⁰ The northern part of the diocese of Vercelli, had experienced a series of revolts, led by both townspeople and peasants, throughout the thirteenth century when most of the Valsesians rebelled against their feudal lords, the *Biandrate*.⁶¹ These revolts continued for the next several decades, becoming especially intense when the Vercellese and *Biandrate* tried to extend their control deep into the mountains. According to both Corrado Mornese and Franco Dessilani, the armed insurrection came to an abrupt halt in 1275 when their adversaries finally concluded a treaty that ceded autonomy and independence to the Valsesians.⁶² This hard-fought sovereignty remained intact for well almost 30 years until, in 1303, Vercelli was taken over by the papal-backed Guelph faction that promptly appointed a conservative bishop intent on reasserting feudal and ecclesiastical privileges in Valsesia.⁶³ Into this simmering mix dropped Dolcino the following year, trailed by inquisitors and

crusaders whose very presence violated both the spirit and the letter of the treaty of independence. With their independence at stake, the inhabitants of Valsesia were prepared to once again fight to defend their rights, and in fact they offered armed protection to Dolcino and his followers, in part because they shared a common foe.⁶⁴

Contrary to the narratives that have typically emphasized the apocalypticism of Dolcino as the cause of violence, the subsequent fighting recorded in the *Historia* and *De Secta* was likely undertaken by the Valsesians themselves. Moreover, the standard accounts tend to treat the conflict, especially the involvement of the Valsesians, as exclusively religious and doctrinal. The more precise and contextualized interpretations of Mornese, Merlo, and Dessilani account for the social and economic conditions in the region; conditions that made the area ripe for rebellion, especially when the hard-fought Valsesian autonomy was threatened by repressive feudal forces.

CONCLUSION

This analysis, ranging across time and ideologies, is intended to show how historians have almost universally misrepresented the Order of Apostles, obscuring its history by sensationalizing (and even fabricating) the group's activities. Typically, this misrepresentation has taken the form of repeating uncritically the narratives found in the biased sources of the Franciscan, Salimbene of Parma, or the Dominican inquisitor, Bernard Gui. One cause of this misrepresentation lies in the fact that anyone writing after 1307 knew that the peaceful and simple apostolic lifestyle of Segarelli had evolved into the apocalyptic and violent rhetoric of Dolcino. Moreover, with knowledge of Dolcino's failed prophecies and the crusades that successfully exterminated the Apostles, many of the writers mentioned here might have been inclined to dismiss the group outright, perhaps deeming their history unworthy of critical analysis in light of the group's annihilation. In doing so, such treatments have failed to consider the two obviously different stages of the Order's development, first under Segarelli and then later under Dolcino, by assuming that the group's ideology, agenda, and even membership were homogenous and unchanging.

This flawed tradition has led authors from a variety of ideological backgrounds to repeat the same basic conclusions. Thus we find the common accusations that Segarelli was illiterate and simpleminded, that Dolcino was the bastard son of a priest, that Segarelli, Dolcino, and other members were sexually licentious and morally corrupt, that the Order preached a violent and bloody extermination of both nobles and ecclesiastics, and that they actively took up arms to bring on the end times. These allegations do nothing less than challenge the intent and

integrity of the Order, thus perpetuating the stereotype of the Apostles as blood-thirsty, opportunistic, self-serving heretics hell-bent on violence and revolution. However, when one strips away the obscuring layers of ideology and bias, a more accurate rendering of their history comes into focus, one that acknowledges the Order's peaceful and socially varied origins, its persecution at the hands of ecclesiastical foes, and its violent demise in the midst of a larger political struggle for control of Valsesia.

Changing Society and Economy, 1000–1250

The rise of urban cultures and institutions from the eleventh through the mid-fourteenth centuries profoundly altered the appearance and structure of the Latin West. After a protracted period of urban decline and decay following the Germanic invasions of the fifth century, the resurgence of towns beginning in the eleventh century not only fostered new forms of government and helped to revive widespread commercial activity but also allowed for the development of new social and economic classes and even occasionally aided in the consolidation of monarchical power. While this period saw the rise of new urban groups like the merchant middle class it also witnessed the decline of many of the old nobility, such as the rural feudal lords, and this restructuring was anything but peaceful. The dramatic impact of these changes visibly also altered the previous make up of medieval European society by increasing the amount of wealth held by secular governments, by the church, and especially by individuals. The new money economy would, for many, create a troubling discrepancy between the ideal of apostolic poverty that was preached from the pulpit and the wealthy and luxurious reality of the new economic system.

URBAN REVIVAL

Though not all towns declined following the Germanic invasions of the West, those that did survive tended to exist under the domination of their resident bishop or the local lord. However, with the virtual cessation of Viking and Magyar invasions in the mid- to late tenth century, Europeans gradually began to repopulate those cities that did remain. The security afforded by the end of raids and pillaging allowed the population to grow and this near-continuous demographic growth fueled what Robert S. Lopez terms an “urban surge.”¹ This gradual surge of people into the cities, many with considerable wealth, eventually strained the episcopal or seignorial system of government and created the need on the part of many to alter the traditional form of rule.²

Gradually, from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries, many towns sought charters that would guarantee certain civic rights and privileges such as freedom from arbitrary seizure of property, right to conduct commerce with relatively little intervention, and, most importantly, freedom from servile or tenurial

obligations. Though many kings, bishops, and lords initially opposed this notion of urban freedom, eventually many of them began to see the tangible financial benefits they could reap by fostering this revenue generating system. Thus town leaders entered into negotiations with their overlords in order to secure various freedoms, typically through cash payments of an annual rent or ferm. As R. H. Hilton explains, this payment provided "a major element in the cash income of their lords and the state."³ The charter of Lorris, which was granted by Louis VII in 1155, offered a model that was often repeated throughout northern France. It states, in part, that "no inhabitant of the parish of Lorris shall be required to pay a toll or any other tax on his provisions," neither shall anyone with property in Lorris "forfeit it for any offense whatsoever, unless the offense shall have been committed against us [the King]." As for that prized notion of town freedom, the charter of Lorris states that, "[a]ny one who shall dwell a year and a day in the parish of Lorris . . . shall abide there freely and without molestation."⁴

Similar rights were granted by urban overlords in other parts of Europe as well, particularly in England where successive English kings from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries generally favored town charters. Henry I's grant of privileges to the city of London in 1133 not only provided for mercantile exemptions such as freedom from tolls but also recognized relatively autonomous jurisdictional privileges, allowing that "the citizens shall appoint as sheriff *from themselves* whomsoever they may choose, and shall appoint *from among themselves* as justice whosoever they choose."⁵ Likewise, Lincoln received similar grants of privileges from Henry II in 1160 while Ipswich benefitted from the charter of John I in 1200.⁶

Similarly, noble lords and bishops in England and elsewhere granted rights to towns in order to reap the cash harvest. A certain English count, Robert, confirmed the economic privileges of Burford to both his and the town's benefit, while on the continent William Clito, count of Flanders, granted the town of St. Omer freedom from tolls in exchange for payment of an annual rent.⁷ In the German Empire, the bishop of Münster granted municipal freedom to the town of Ebenbuhholtz by allowing them the right to the *Weichbild*, the government of the town through the appointment of their own officials. Though Ebenbuhholtz itself received interior administrative privileges, the charter explicitly stated that the count of Dingden, to whose county the town (and bishop) belonged, would retain civil jurisdiction over the town.⁸ These charters thus allowed for both economic and political freedom in these growing urban environments while filling the noble, royal, and episcopal coffers. However, though lords and kings benefitted financially from them, the development of relatively independent towns could, and often did, work against these very same noble interests by creating semiautonomous political units that grew in power and influence, as is the case with the rise of communes in the Lombard cities of Italy.

In northern Italy, this movement toward civic independence often came at the expense of the power of a city's bishop, the higher nobility (*capitanei*), and sometimes even the emperor himself. The most successful revolts against such authorities, especially in areas like Lombardy and Tuscany, were usually achieved by a commune, an alliance formed by an oath of allegiance of townsmen typically made up of the lesser nobility (*vavassores*) and the emerging merchant class.⁹ The communal movement in Italy did not completely replace the power of bishops in their cities for they retained a strong presence, but it did create a popular governmental system that superseded many of their previous administrative functions.

Other factors in the development of the Italian communes were major economic changes due to a revival in trade, the rise of a moneyed- as opposed to a landed-economy and a surge in population growth, all of which gave rise to new classes of citizens and new sources of wealth and power. These dramatic changes to medieval European society ultimately led to confrontations between the old ruling elites, such as the bishops and nobles whose power was based on agricultural holdings, and the new urban classes, whose new income and influence were the direct result of the new economy. Although not all Italian communal movements involved opposition to the bishop, a significant number did and, typically, such movements involved the class of second-rank nobles (*vavassores*) who often allied with the emerging merchant class against the landed nobility and the near-exclusive control of civic institutions. These drastic attempts to establish completely autonomous urban self-governance arose first near the end of the eleventh century and, as a general rule, succeeded in restricting episcopal and noble authority in favor of collective governance.

The context for the rise of communes in Italy is partly a result of the region's unique history compared to other parts of Europe, which is notable for its urban continuity after the collapse of Roman imperial administration in the west in the late fifth century. While many cities and towns throughout the west were abandoned, those in Italy generally retained their inhabitants because of the strong presence of the local bishop who often became the *de facto* ruler as imperial authority disintegrated. The bishop could use his vast ecclesiastical resources to provide defense and protection to the town, which made them safe havens in an uncertain world. By the time of the Carolingian dynasty of the eighth and ninth centuries, Frankish nobles had come to dominate the countryside, and many bishops, who themselves often had vast land holdings, developed alliances with the nobility while managing to retain their position of primacy within the city itself. Shortly thereafter, during the Ottonian period of the late tenth century when German rulers were extending their imperial domain, bishops began to be appointed by the emperor himself, to rule over various cities. These appointments, called lay investiture, in part would form the basis of a major political struggle that would dominate the latter half of the eleventh and the first part of

the twelfth centuries, and it was the investiture conflict itself that would be one of the key factors in the rise of the Italian communes, particularly since imperial resources that could be used to stifle the creation of the communes were instead directed at other, usually papal, adversaries.

During their ascendancy, these communes established independent city-states such as Milan, Piacenza, Bologna, Parma, Venice, Florence, and Pisa, which would become characteristic of Italian governments for the rest of the Middle Ages. Bishop Otto of Freising, uncle of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, though hostile to the communes themselves because of their refusal to submit to imperial authority nevertheless provides a glimpse of the political independence and even the quasi-democratic nature of Italian communes. Regarding the cities of Lombardy, Otto writes that:

they are so desirous of *liberty* that, avoiding the insolence of power, they are governed by the will of the consuls rather than rulers. There are known to be three orders among them: captains [nobles], vavassors, and commoners. And in order to suppress arrogance, the aforesaid consuls are chosen not from one but from each of the three classes. And lest they should exceed bounds by lust for power, they are changed almost every year. The consequence is that, as practically that entire land is divided among the cities, each of them requires its bishops to live in the cities, and scarcely any noble or great man can be found in all the surrounding territory who does not acknowledge the authority of his city.¹⁰

Thus the popular government of the commune became the supreme authority in this new political urban landscape, while the previous power brokers, the bishop and upper nobility, were clearly now beholden to the communal control.

The communes were able to achieve this independence during the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries due, in part, to the fact that their supreme overlord, the German Emperor, was often unable to exert sustained direct control over them because he either resided back in Germany itself, was engaged in crusade, or, as was the case with Frederick II, spent considerable time in the Empire's Sicilian holdings. Moreover, those emperors that did spend significant amounts of time in Italy, such as Frederick Barbarossa, often found themselves embroiled in struggle with the papacy and in many cases with the communes themselves. This new medieval political entity, the city-state, was a formidable political opponent that quickly achieved civic and regional dominance and thus was able to effectively assert itself and the concerns of its populace over and against even the interests of the Emperor himself. In other words, in forming the commune, townsmen were forging a new identity for themselves and forever altering the political landscape of Europe.

Communes came into existence north of the Alps as well, but never fully achieved the political clout to the extent that they did in Italy. In the north,

townsmen often had to resort to violence in order to assure that their demands were met. Perhaps the most famous of these incidents is that recounted by the Benedictine abbot, Guibert of Nogent, regarding the revolt of the French commune of Laon in 1112. Guibert relates that, upon hearing of Laon's request for communal privileges, "[t]he clergy and the archdeacons and the nobles, taking account of these conditions and *looking for ways to extract money from the people*, offered them through their agents the opportunity to have authorization to create a commune."¹¹ Guibert defined a commune, in part, as "an arrangement for them all to pay the customary head tax, which they owe their lords as a servile due, in one lump sum once a year" and where "all other financial exactions which are customarily imposed on serfs are completely abolished."¹² Although such a financial arrangement appeared to be agreeable to all parties involved and money indeed changed hands, the bishop of Laon, fearing his loss of episcopal authority, rallied the nobles to pay King Louis VI a large sum in order to annul their prior oath to the commune.

When word reached the townspeople that their agreement had been broken they "were no longer merely angry, but were goaded into an animal rage. Binding themselves by mutual oaths, they conspired for the death, or rather the murder, of the bishop and his accomplices."¹³ Soon thereafter, cries of "Commune!" were heard throughout the city and the citizens stormed the episcopal palace, found the bishop in hiding, and executed him in a thoroughly gruesome manner. Though the commune had initially secured privileges through peaceful negotiations, in the end it was only through violence that they were able to see their demands through to the end. It is worth noting here that though most privileges were achieved in a peaceful manner, France was not alone in its episode of aggressive and violent communalism. Germany too saw its share of communal uprisings well before France, notably when the citizens of Cologne rebelled against and expelled their archbishop in 1074 because "it seemed to them a disgrace to submit like women to the rule of the archbishop, who was governing them in a tyrannical manner."¹⁴ In short, the communal movements as well as the peaceful granting of charters created new forms of specifically *urban* governmental institutions that effectively challenged the old order of episcopal and seignorial rule.

Throughout the previous discussion of urban privileges, one factor has dominated the dialogue: money. Urbanization and the increase of the flow of wealth in medieval Europe are intricately intertwined. Overall, the economic livelihood of towns was a key factor not only in their achievement of independence but also played a prominent role in the evolution of the economic structure of the Latin West as a whole. In order to understand this link, it is necessary to explain the revival of trade and commerce from the eleventh century onward. Robert Lopez records a dramatic shift in the economic practices of the Latin West beginning in the late tenth century. As cities rose in number and prominence after the tenth

century, trade likewise began to expand in connection with these urban centers. Lopez considers two factors to be of the utmost importance in this commercial revolution: the end of the Viking and Magyar invasions in the tenth century and a rise in agricultural surplus.¹⁵ With the lifting of the siege mentality, western Europe was able to open itself up to new economic opportunities, while the production and sale of agricultural surplus provided the necessary wealth. As Lopez notes, the “nerve centers” for this Commercial Revolution were the towns as they not only provided a central locale where trade could take place but also a concentrated, urban population of merchants whose very existence was geared toward trade.¹⁶

As the locus of commercial activity, certain cities began to rise in prominence due to the wealth they derived from their economic enterprises. Chief among these cities was the Italian port of Venice, later followed by its western peninsular counterparts, Genoa and Pisa. Unlike most northern European cities, Italian cities did not suffer as severe a recession, in part because they did not experience such widespread abandonment of urban culture following the Germanic invasions. Although it was not a Roman-founded city, Venice nevertheless prospered as an urban port under the watchful eye of the Byzantine Empire. The city slowly profited from its lucrative trade with the east, particularly its trade with the Byzantine capital of Constantinople, as it imported much-valued cloth to sell to the Italian hinterland. Not only did Venice trade extensively with the Muslim Levant but the city also had its own important export in the form of salt, a necessary dietary staple. The Belgian economic historian, Henri Pirenne, has argued that European shipping and trade in the Mediterranean was effectively stifled because the sea had become a virtual Muslim lake of pirates and brigands. Due to Muslim domination, Pirenne concluded that “instead of the age-old link which it had hitherto been between East and West, the Mediterranean became a barrier.”¹⁷ Though this may have been partially true for the western Mediterranean, Venice’s extensive trade with Constantinople *and* the Muslim territories indicates that it was by no means a “Muslim lake.”

Although the Muslims in the western Mediterranean may not have been as much of a barrier as Pirenne believed them to be, nonetheless, after the combined forces of Genoa and Pisa drove the Muslims from Sardinia and Corsica around 1016 trade via sea began to increase between these western Italian cities and the French city of Marseilles and the Spanish Barcelona.¹⁸ Trade routes and safety were further secured by the Norman conquest of southern Italy, which was completed by 1092. These conquests not only opened up the western Mediterranean to almost exclusive Italian trading, but the Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians now had lucrative wares to sell and much-needed services to offer, for a price.

The fortunes of cities such as Venice and Genoa firmly rested on their economic successes or failures. In fact, one could argue that these cities came to be

singularly identified with and defined by the economic services they offered. Perhaps the single most important historical phenomenon related to the economic and political strength of these Italian cities was the Crusades. From Urban II's speech at the council of Clermont in 1095 preaching the necessity of Crusade to the Holy Land until the last ship left Acre with the expulsion of the Franks by the Sultan Khalil, Italian shipping and trade was crucial in sustaining the western crusading impulse. For the Venetians especially, the Crusades gave great impetus to their trade. Having assisted the Byzantines with extensive shipping and naval services, the Venetians were in a unique position to reap considerable benefits from the entire crusading endeavor. The Crusades allowed Venice to erect a huge network of trading bases throughout the Aegean, which further expanded their sphere of influence, opening up even more mercantile opportunities. Their most important bases in the Adriatic and the Aegean allowed for continued trade even after the expulsion of the Franks from the Levant in 1291. As N. J. G. Pounds notes in his economic survey of the Middle Ages, the Crusades allowed the Venetians to acquire a virtual monopoly over trade with the East and nowhere was this more evident than in their ability to divert the Fourth Crusade of 1204 from its initial goal of recapturing Jerusalem to the conquest and subjugation of Constantinople.¹⁹ Due to this diversion, the Venetians were able to dominate trading in the Levant well into the time of the Ottoman Empire.

The prosperity of Venice as an urban center was thus intimately associated with its economic livelihood. Venetian trade not only increased the availability of wealth in the city itself but also helped expand a cash (and later, credit) economy throughout most of the Latin West. Socially, this rapid increase in trade fostered the growth of new classes in urban society—wealthy merchants and skilled artisans. With these new social developments, Venice was not at all unlike other urban centers in western Europe where trade and mercantile activity flourished.

This intertwined growth of towns and trade vastly changed the previously rural and regionally isolated nature of European society by fostering the creation of distinct areas or regions of commercial and manufacturing specialization, increasing communication and contact with diverse parts of Europe, and revolutionizing its very economic structure with the creation of new financial institutions. First, areas of specialized trade and manufacturing arose in direct association with their immediate urban centers. Cities, as trading “nerve centers,” encouraged the growth of markets and fairs in their area, naturally benefitting financially from their close association. For example, the Champagne Fairs of France, though named for the region where they occurred, nevertheless were directly associated with specific towns, such as Troyes, Provins, Lagny, and Bar-sur-Aube. Especially prominent from the first half of the twelfth century,

these fairs, predictably situated on major trading routes, helped to increase travel and communication networks between diverse parts of Europe. As such, these “international” fairs and markets did much to dissolve the regional isolationism that had developed in the wake of the breakup of the Roman Empire.

Due in large part to this increase in trade, different parts of Europe came to be known to other areas and regions for their particular products. Of all the trades in Europe during this time, the woolen industry was by far the most widespread. England and Spain were widely believed to produce the highest quality raw wool and their major cities that exported the wool, London and Barcelona, for example, directly benefited from this cornering of the market. Similarly, cloth production was widespread throughout the Low Countries, northern France, and northern Italy, but medieval merchants considered Flanders the preeminent locale for the production of fine cloth. Consequently, the Flemish cities of Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres benefited significantly from the large sums of money flowing into their communal coffers. As these various cities increasingly gave themselves over to the trade in these goods, they themselves consequently became great importers, not only of luxury items but also of the very staples and essentials they required to survive, such as wheat, which they no longer harvested as extensively. This need to import food items from afar created a new form of economic interdependence between these urban trading centers, which further disintegrated the regional isolationism of previous centuries and arguably created what we can rightfully call a “European” economy.

Further changes in this urbanized economy can be seen in the many innovations that occurred from the eleventh century onward. The use of credit exchange, “purchasing” an item unseen or without the necessary funds at the time, was widely employed at those regional fairs where accounts were typically settled at the end of the event. In southern France in 1248, for example, a certain Peter Roubard purchased six loads of cotton from a dealer on credit, writing on his credit slip that “we now owe you 106 pounds of the mixed money now current in Marseilles,” promising that payment would be made the following August. As an added measure of security for the seller, Peter vowed that “we promise to reimburse you for all costs and expenses incurred in the seeking of the payment of that sum after the agreed date.”²⁰ Naturally, if one expected to collect on these outstanding accounts, the merchant needed to maintain detailed and accurate records of his transactions, which necessarily required a certain amount of literacy on the part of those involved. In the statement of credit noted above, it is important to note that the document is not simply a list of the product, its price, and the names of those involved but rather is fully written out as a literate entry into the accounting book. Finally, though much too complex for a study of this nature, the revival of trade and the proliferation of credit and bills of exchange

also helped to create important Florentine banks like the Bardi, Peruzzi, and Acciaiuoli that naturally allowed for an even greater expansion of the medieval economy based on such solid financial support.

One fundamental change that came about as a direct consequence of this new market economy was a radical shift in the perception of time. The French historian, Jacques Le Goff, has noted that with the growth and organization of commercial networks, "time became an object of measurement."²¹ This quantified understanding of time differed from both the seasonal dominion of the meteorological and seasonal time experienced by the peasant, as well as the cyclical liturgical time of the church. Merchants began to measure and regulate their professional time, requiring a more adequate and precise means of calculation, which reinforced the importance of time in the conducting of business. Le Goff found that the necessity for quantifying time, whether on the part of merchants or artisans, gave rise to communal clocks that strictly measured time and signaled the beginning of "the organization of work."²² The fact that such necessity arose among the laity regarding their explicitly nonreligious activities led to what can be called the "secularization" of time. This new conceptualization, argues Le Goff, was largely responsible for the proliferation of sophisticated clocks more precise than sundials or water clocks and represented "the great revolution of the communal movement in the time domain."²³ In short, the urban institutions of commerce and labor revolutionized the mental outlook of medieval Europeans, forever altering their (and our) conception of time and work.

The rapid growth of trade and the general increase in wealth among certain elements of society created profound changes in the structure of the urban environment, particularly with the creation of the new class of bourgeoisie and the rise of that uniquely urban institution, the guild. Wealthy burghers, most of them merchants, formed the basis of a new wealthy echelon of society in the form of urban elites. Urban culture thus altered the traditional "three orders" of society (priests, knights, and peasants) by adding to them the fourth order of the bourgeoisie. Due in part to their wealth and kinship ties, these rich burghers were able to take over the reins of civic government from episcopal or seignorial control precisely because of their bureaucratic and financial expertise developed as merchants. In the creation of this new class lies yet another example of the extent of the changes wrought by the rise of urban culture.

Guilds likewise were a dynamic aspect of the urban environment both in their ability to propel senior members into lucrative civil administrative positions and also in the benefits offered to members in good standing. Initially, guilds began as a protective association of both merchants and artisans to serve their common interests in regulating trade and production within the town. Guilds thus controlled prices and wages, often creating a virtual monopoly over all mercantile

activity in the town. The rules of the guild merchant at Southampton indicate the extent of this monopoly, stating:

[N]o one of the city of Southampton shall buy anything to sell again in the same city, unless he is of the gild [sic] merchant or of the franchise. And if anyone shall do so and is convicted of it, all which he had bought shall be forfeited to the king; and no one shall be quit of custom unless he proves that he is in a gild or in the franchise, and this from year to year. And no one shall buy honey, fat, salt herrings, or any kind of oil, or millstones, or fresh hides, or any kind of fresh skins, unless he is a gildsman: nor keep a tavern for wine, nor sell cloth at retail, except in market or fair days; nor keep grain in his granary beyond five quarters, to sell at retail, if he is not a gildsman.²⁴

The multitude of regulations regarding so many different economic enterprises within Southampton reveal the lengths guilds went to in order to control the mercantile activities within their individual cities. However, as time went on, guilds tended to cater more to the needs of their mercantile elites than to the artisans, resulting in an economic and ideological rift that induced the artisans to form their own guilds. These new, exclusively artisanal guilds really began to rise in prominence at the beginning of the thirteenth century and represented virtually every conceivable profession from fishermen to cobblers to drapers, to name only a select few. Thirteenth-century Paris even saw the birth of a women's guild for silk spinners, indicating that the new economic opportunities of the towns did not pertain exclusively to men.

These guilds, whether merchant or artisanal, often predated the official chartering of their respective towns, but their existence was typically guaranteed by these charters. The charter, for example, for the town of St. Omer in 1127 indirectly recognized the local guilds and their freedom from tolls.²⁵ Royal patronage of guilds occurred not only indirectly in general town charters but quite often was established through charters aimed directly at the guilds themselves. Thus, Henry II in 1162 granted a charter in favor of the guild of weavers in London that proclaimed, in part, that these same weavers could:

have their gild [sic] in London with all the liberties and customs which they had in the time of King Henry, my grandfather . . . and they shall have all the aforesaid things as well and peacefully and freely and honourably and entirely as ever they had.²⁶

Considering that a distinctive majority of town charters contain similar provisions recognizing the privileges of guilds, it is apparent that the townspeople firmly believed that guilds were critically important to the urban prosperity.

Guilds uniquely provided for the well-being of their members and others in the town in a variety of ways that reveal the extent of their civic-mindedness and concern for urban stability and prosperity. Regarding the care of its members, the rules of the merchant guild of Southampton provided benefits to guildsmen both during and after their earthly lives. The guild rules state that if a member “falls into poverty and has not the wherewithal to live, and is not able to work or to provide for himself, he shall have one mark from the gild to relieve his condition when the gild shall sit.”²⁷ When a member died, the guild provided for the funeral both in payments and in person, to “bear the body and bring it to the place of burial.”²⁸ Additionally candles were lit and masses said for the deceased. The guilds similarly assisted the poor and sick, and even provided for the monastic community of the city as the rules of Southampton state that:

the lepers of La Madeleine shall have the alms of the gild, two sesters of ale, and the sick of God’s House and of St. Julian shall have two sesters of ale. And the Friars Minor shall have two sesters of ale and one sester of wine. And four sesters of ale shall be given to the poor whenever the gild shall meet.²⁹

The guilds thus provided charitable assistance to its own members as well as to needy townsfolk in general, not only out of pious religious duty but, conceivably, as a visible expression of the guild’s prominence within the city and its ability to influence and regulate a variety of civic affairs.

This concern for the well-being of the city and its populace in the form of charity was a marked change in the outlook of medieval society. In much the same way the religious component of guild life, whether through burials, masses, or processions, indicates an ever-increasing involvement on the part of the laity in what had previously been the exclusive domain of ecclesiastics. These urban and religious concerns of the townspeople apparently coalesced and gave rise to the formation of a new, uniquely *civic* consciousness.

Finally, one institution of lasting importance that rose up in conjunction with urban centers was the university. Four major universities, among others, stand out as exceptional locales for specialized study of various arts; the University of Bologna focused almost exclusively on law, Montpellier on medicine, and the Universities of Paris and Oxford concerned themselves with issues of theology and philosophy. The cultural, theological, and philosophical importance of these schools in the development of medieval Europe cannot be overstated, as they produced some of the greatest minds of their time, including the scholastic innovators Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas, as well as Irnerius and Gratian who led the revival of legal science and Roman law.³⁰ Needless to say, the very distinct urban nature of these schools is readily reflected in their names. Urban centers provided the initial impetus for the founding of these schools, for many began

as cathedral schools associated with the bishop's seat of power, which, by definition, was the town. The towns also provided the necessary concentration of urban elites or drew in members of the rural nobility who then provided a significant portion of the university population.

The chartering of the different universities was undertaken by a variety of interested parties, from kings and popes to emperors and communes. However disparate they may seem, all these patrons held in common the belief that the university community of scholars and students would be an asset in one way or another, whether through the education of monastics in their doctrinal struggle against heresy, the elaboration of Christian philosophy in light of the "rediscovery" of Aristotle, or even as a producer of learned administrators who could better serve the ever-increasing bureaucratic needs of the state. As such, the Council of the Commune of Siena in 1250 concluded that a certain Master Tebaldus, "whose teaching would be very useful and profitable to *the Commune and People of Siena*," should be exempted from all duties and fees "since it would be a *disgrace for the Commune and the People* (of Siena) if the Aretines [a rival commune] kept this our citizen, in their territory."³¹ Moreover, in 1274, the commune awarded cash payments for this same Master Tebaldus, "who contributed to the making of many good and righteous men in the City of Siena."³²

In chartering the University of Bologna in 1158, the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa was in part attempting to call upon the legal scholars there in assisting him in his bid to reassert legal, imperial control over his Italian kingdom.³³ Similarly, Emperor Frederick II, almost a century later, granted a foundation charter for the University of Naples in 1224 intending, in part, to reap the benefits of an educated, loyal, and above all *secular* body of administrators. Amid language indicating that he was creating the university to satisfy the starving intellectual needs of his people, Frederick reveals his ulterior motives when he states that:

We order that at Naples, loveliest of all cities, all the professional arts shall be taught and a seat of studies established . . . *In doing so we intend to promote the welfare of our republic* and at the same time, through our special generosity and affection, we wish to provide for the needs of our subjects.³⁴

Frederick II thus realized the direct, practical use of a scholarly community, particularly one that he founded, for administrative (or at the very least, propaganda) purposes.

CONCLUSION

The rise of urban cultures and institutions from the eleventh through the mid-fourteenth centuries dramatically altered the very fabric of society in the Latin

West. The traditional, rigid tripartite division of society into the three orders of ecclesiastics, nobles, and peasants was forever altered by the rise of a wealthy new merchant class in the cities. The appearance of this merchant-burgher class was due in part to the widespread revival of trade and the vast amounts of wealth generated by this resurgence. This new class of bourgeoisie had the economic freedom and ability to liberate their cities from the control of lords and bishops, thereby establishing new forms of urban communal governance. In Italy especially, these communes were often able to gain complete independence, though in the case of Lombardy it required long periods of extended warfare with the German Emperor. Economic innovations abounded as well, from the growing use of credit, to extensive bookkeeping, and even to the growth of trade and banking on a truly international scale. These changes not only fostered the growth of a literate, if not educated, class of merchants but also altered the very conception of time itself, making even that an object of trade and profit. Cities also provided a fertile environment for the establishment of universities, which often returned the favor by providing a class of educated professionals who could effectively fill and execute bureaucratic positions in communal, papal, and even royal governments. Moreover, cities continued to be valued and patronized by monarchs not only for their ability to provide secular administrators but also because they were revenue generating powerhouses that could potentially alleviate the growing financial burden of monarchs who increasingly went to war from the thirteenth century onward. Thus, the impact of urban cultures and institutions on the Latin West in the High Middle Ages was, in a word, growth. But, as we shall see, this growth came at a price. Although the standard of living was generally raised and many people materially benefitted, from merchants to archbishops to popes, this new wealth and prosperity also created a greater and more visible discrepancy between the biblical message of apostolic poverty promoted by the church and its very landed and wealthy holdings. This disconnect between theory and practice would ultimately inspire reformers like Segarelli and Dolcino, whose ideas and disagreements would eventually result in terrible upheaval and violence.

Vying for Power: The Changing Political Landscape

In conjunction with the major economic changes sweeping medieval Europe, a vast political reordering also occurred from roughly the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries. This period witnessed the rise and subsequent decline of the German empire, the ascendancy of the papacy and the rise and consolidation of monarchies in England and France. In addition to this consolidation of political power at the state level, this period also witnessed, especially in northern Italy, the waning of rural noble/feudal control in favor of urban/communal governance. Each of these parties saw their avenue to power as viable only at the expense of the other power brokers, and thus long-standing, often violent, rivalries broke out, perhaps most familiar in the struggle between supporters of the German Empire and supporters of the papal monarchy. These chaotic clashes between church and state, where each side sought to bolster their claim to supremacy by appealing to both Scripture and the public, had the unexpected effect of instilling in people an impetus to question the legitimacy of political and ecclesiastical authority. Unable to regulate such inquiry, institutions such as the church would ultimately find themselves under assault, both theologically and physically, from various quarters but above all from dissenters from within their own ranks, such as the Order of Apostles.

OTTONIAN INFLUENCE IN ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS

An example of medieval state-building that would ultimately lead to centuries of political and religious strife can be found in the reign of the German Emperor, Otto I (936–97). Beginning with Otto I's coronation as emperor in 962, he and his successors sought to exert their control over their imperial holdings, particularly in northern Italy but, as was often the case, they were stymied by the remnants of landed Carolingian aristocracy.¹ These nobles were reluctant to cede power to the new German emperors and thus could provide an effective check on imperial administrative expansion, particularly in places like Lombardy and Piedmont. To counter this noble opposition, the emperors could, on the one hand, attempt to seek common cause with the aristocracy, which was fraught with danger and deception or, on the other hand, they could seek an alliance with the ecclesiastical

authorities in the cities, usually the bishop. This second option appeared to be the best route to effective imperial administration, especially from afar, particularly when one considers that the emperors could, and usually did, appoint their own supporters to these episcopal seats. In most cases, the persons selected for the bishopric were not only handpicked by the emperor for their loyalty, but also for their learning and education.² Thus, with the growth of empire came the imperial management of church affairs, first at the episcopal level and then ultimately at the papal level.

To understand why many emperors chose to meddle in ecclesiastical issues, it is necessary to understand that the fragmented and contentious political situation in the German territories meant emperors had to seek allies outside of the power-hungry dukes. After the collapse of the Carolingian dynasty and its partition among Charlemagne's grandchildren, Germany was administratively fractured among these nobles who had vast land holdings that they administered and used to fund their own small feudal forces. Since any move by the emperor to gain more power would be vociferously and even violently opposed by the German aristocracy, alliances with ecclesiastics was necessary first in Germany and then later, as the empire expanded, in Italy as well. This state/church alliance began in earnest under perhaps the most ambitious leader of the Saxon dynasty, Otto I (the Great), who ruled Germany (technically East Francia of the old Carolingian Empire) from 936–73. Otto's monarchical (and possibly imperial) goals angered his German nobles who almost immediately rose up in revolt against him. His success in crushing the revolt was achieved in part through Otto's reliance on the military machine his father, Henry I, had developed but just as important was the support he received from church officials throughout his royal holdings. Of course, Otto did not have to work too hard to convince these ecclesiastics, many of whom were members of his own immediate family, to support him since he had personally placed many of them in their positions. He had already vested them not only with their office but also with land, entitlements, and authority.

Many ecclesiastics became *de facto* royal bureaucrats and directly assisted in governing the kingdom, especially since bishops were granted the privilege to administer justice in their diocese. Thus while bishops and abbots had often been allowed to exercise low justice (the imposition of fines for minor offenses), beginning under Otto many were granted the extraordinary right to dispense high justice, in the form of the imperial ban, and to administer corporeal and capital punishments.³ Otto and his successors also granted churches and abbeys direct royal protection from the dukes, from whose power and jurisdiction they were now removed. Moreover, many of these royal grants to the church also included jurisdiction over vast counties and as the privilege came from the crown, it effectively made this bishoprics and monasteries an integral part of the royal bureaucracy. All together, these privileges made the bishops especially vital allies of the

crown since they were expected to not only serve the administrative needs of the king but also use their holdings to supply him with the ever-necessary troops of armed retainers.

The strategic investment of clerics was one way to consolidate ecclesiastical and political authority. One example was Otto's installation of his brother, Bruno, as the archbishop of Cologne in part to check the power and growing rebellion of Conrad the Red, duke of Lotharingia.⁴ Otto did not simply drop his brother into Cologne and hope for the best, but actually granted Bruno quasiroyal privileges that augmented both episcopal and royal control over the region. Bruno's powers, in addition to his ecclesiastical duties and obligations, were thus military (the right to build and maintain fortifications) and economic (the establishment of markets, the right to collect tolls and taxes, and, in particular, the right to mint coins). Moreover, like many of the episcopal appointees under Otto, Bruno had been well-groomed for the position in terms of his religious and administrative education. With an ecclesiastical, often monastic, education under their belts, nobles like Bruno typically served as royal chaplains that, under Otto I, had become a vital administrative position.⁵ Otto and his successors then extended this reliance upon the chaplains by installing many of them in episcopal seats, first within Germany and then later throughout the empire, especially in northern Italy. Being both a part of the royal bureaucracy and owing their position and power to the king, these bishops were less likely to pose a threat to the king because of their close ties to the royal court. Additionally, unlike the lands granted to the secular nobility (especially the dukes), the lands granted to these ecclesiastics were not inheritable in the same sense, allowing for much more direct royal control. Thus, Otto's alliance with his own bishops was a winning tactic, considering their power, both religiously and militarily, within his empire. The notion of the German king installing and investing bishops of his choosing was considered by both the crown and the papacy, which itself was relatively powerless during the tenth century, as a royal right. The appointed bishops did not question it in the slightest and, as shall be seen below, many episcopal appointments were directly approved by the papacy itself.

With the power of the German dukes effectively neutralized, at least for the remainder of Otto's reign, he was free to pursue his own imperial interests. He extended his power into the northern Italian kingdom of the Lombards when he invaded and ultimately conquered it in 951. Otto continued his episcopal policy by installing bishops in key Lombard cities. To fortify their positions, these bishops were often granted both secular and ecclesiastical powers that Otto had bestowed on their German counterparts. Otto's imperial aspirations carried him south from the Lombard kingdom due to his desire to be crowned emperor in Rome itself, although he had to wait a decade to do so because of another ducal rebellion and the ever-present threat of Magyar invasions. Still a century away

from the power and influence of the reforming popes, Rome was a city rent by factious nobility constantly at war with one another over supremacy and the pope at any given time was simply part of the currently leading faction.

Outside threats to the papacy were another reason why emperors like Otto became involved in papal affairs and this imperial aid served as the basis for Otto and his successors to claim supremacy over the church. In this case, the former king of the Lombards, Berengar II, and his son, Adalbert, although defeated by Otto in his initial Italian campaign were menacing the pope, John XII, who called on the king for assistance. Much like his Carolingian predecessors, Pepin and Charlemagne, who each entered the city ostensibly to help the bishop of Rome, Otto came to John's aid. In doing so, Otto also followed his royal forebears and formed an alliance with the pope, who apparently thought the new emperor would be helpful in defeating the other Roman nobles. Indeed, Otto received the imperial crown directly from the pope himself in 962. As a sign of his role as a protector and patron of the church, the emperor reaffirmed certain papal privileges dating back to his imperial forebears, such as the Donation of Pepin of 756, which had established the Papal States. Known as the *Privilegium Ottonianum*, this decree also sought to streamline papal elections in part by granting the emperor the right to ratify future papal elections.⁶ To further cement their relationship and in an explicit acknowledgment of the king's (now emperor) supremacy over the church, John gave Otto free rein to set up and administer churches in the newly conquered eastern territories of Germany. In places like Brandenburg and Meissen, Otto established bishoprics along the eastern marches in part as extensions of his royal authority and control, much like he did with the internal bishoprics to check the power of the dukes. Thus the relationship of the churches to the emperor was that of a vassal, in direct service to the state.

Violations of this expected submissive role of the papacy led to further imperial interventions in papal politics. Although John XII initially supported Otto, as would be the case for the next few centuries of imperial/papal struggle, the pope soon chafed under imperial lordship and promptly rebelled against the emperor. This disloyalty prompted Otto to convene a council and depose the rebellious pope. Citing John's violation of the *Privilegium Ottonianum* and the fact that the pope had allied with Otto's enemies (Berengar and Adalbert), in December 963 the emperor organized a synod in Rome that deposed the pontiff and installed his own candidate, Leo VIII. But when Otto left the city shortly after the installation in February 964, a rebellion organized by John XII drove Leo from Rome, ostensibly because the papal election was invalid. Yet another synod was held, headed by John, that officially deposed Leo and reaffirmed John as Roman pontiff. When John died suddenly in May of 964, the Romans elected a pope of their own choosing, Benedict V. Enraged by the process of papal election that bypassed his recently agreed upon imperial authority, Otto marched his army back to Rome,

deposed Benedict, sent him to Hamburg as a deacon (essentially under house arrest), and then reinstated his original candidate, Leo, as pope.⁷ Otto's personal and forceful involvement in papal elections was a continuation of the privilege that the kings, German or otherwise, enjoyed with respect to their appointment of bishops. After all, in terms of power and influence, the pope in the mid-tenth century was more or less equal to other bishops throughout Europe and would not become a quasi-monarchical institution until the pontificate of Pope Gregory VII (1073–85). Moreover, from the perspective of Otto and his successors, the right to appoint popes was an imperial privilege that they, like their Carolingian predecessors, had earned as protectors of the church.

HENRY III AND THE BEGINNING OF PAPAL REFORM

This pattern of imperial involvement established by Otto continued throughout the reign of successive German emperors but ultimately had the unintended effect of encouraging a reformist papacy that ironically sought to do away with imperial control of both episcopal and papal elections.⁸ Many of these reforming trends can be traced to Emperor Henry III (1039–56) of the Salian dynasty, his views on church/state relations, and the dire situation he found Rome in just prior to his imperial coronation in 1046. One of the most important aspects of Henry's reign was his sincere belief in church reform, especially in terms of the relationship between the king and his ecclesiastical appointees. Although Henry took no issue with the royal prerogative of appointing and investing bishops and abbots, he adamantly refused to continue what had essentially become simony, or the buying and selling of church offices. Traditionally, appointment to a bishopric or monastery usually involved direct payment or compensation to the king by the appointee. This practice had served the king well in that he personally selected not only trusted candidates with a vested interest in assisting the crown but, just as importantly, those who had the appropriate funds to make such an appointment financially beneficial to the king as well. But because simony was in theory (but not in practice) forbidden since at least the time of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604), Henry refused to engage in it. Indeed, Henry refused even arrangements that might seem simoniacal, such as receiving gifts instead of direct payment. One could argue that the political, religious, and especially military support the king received from these appointments more than made up for the lost revenue and technically still amounted to "payment," but as no money changed hands it was, for all intents and purposes, a clean investment. Despite the lack of payment, the king's superior position in the relationship between the crown and the church was maintained in that the king still performed the nomination and, just as important, he still invested bishops with the symbols of the office, the staff

(for shepherding the flock) and the ring (signifying the bishop's marriage to the church).⁹

Considering Henry's reforming tendency with regard to the church in his own territories, it is no wonder that he took drastic steps to purge the Roman papacy of its most vile elements once he arrived in Italy for his coronation in 1046. The situation he found in Rome was appallingly scandalous, in part because there were three rival claimants for St. Peter's seat. Benedict IX was a prominent son of one of the two rival noble families controlling Rome and the papacy. Benedict's clan, the Tuscullans, counted among their members six popes in the preceding century and a half, including his immediate two predecessors, Benedict VIII (1012–24) and John XIX (1024–32). Traditionally viewed as a thoroughly corrupt and immoral pontiff (see Chapter 5 for more details), in late 1044 Benedict IX was forced out of the city by his rivals, the Crescentii, who installed their own pope, Sylvester III (formerly bishop of Sabina), who assumed the office in January 1045. Yet, within a few short months, the Tusculan forces regrouped and returned, drove Sylvester out and reinstated Benedict as pope. Interestingly, Sylvester returned to his bishopric, but did not renounce the title of pope, even though excommunicated by Benedict. Despite Benedict's success in his armed effort to retake the papacy, by May of the same year he decided to leave pontiff's position in order to marry. Rather than simply renounce his title, Benedict actually sold the papal seat to his godfather, John Gratian, a priest, who then became Gregory VI.

At this point there were thus still two popes, Sylvester, still in quasiexile, and Gregory, but that situation would quickly change and become much more complicated. Apparently thwarted in his attempts at marriage, Benedict decided that perhaps he did indeed want the papacy and reasserted his claim as the rightfully elected representative of St. Peter, even taking over parts of the city to do so.¹⁰ Neither Sylvester nor Gregory stepped down, leading to the scandal of three popes at the same time. Into this volatile mix stepped the reform-minded emperor, arriving in Rome in part for his coronation but also in part to clean up the papal mess. For his part, Pope Gregory met with emperor upon his arrival at Piacenza, offering his assistance in settling the dispute, and Henry tasked him with calling church leaders together at a synod held at Sutri in December 1046. Almost immediately, and with the approval of the emperor, the synod deposed Sylvester who, along with Gregory, was in attendance, as well as the absentee Benedict. Sylvester was stripped of his ecclesiastical status and banished to a monastery for the rest of his days. Gregory made a case for remaining pope, claiming that although he had technically purchased the position, he did so to save it from the evils of Benedict and honestly sought reform of the church's most high position. The synod did indeed determine that Gregory was guilty of simony, whereupon he resigned and the emperor had him sent off back to Germany (presumably Cologne) where he

died shortly thereafter in 1048.¹¹ Considered an honest and pious reformer, it is interesting to note that when Gregory left Rome and the papacy he was followed by a fellow monk by the name of Hildebrand, who stayed with him in his imperial exile until his death.¹² This Hildebrand would soon return to the papal court as Pope Gregory VII in 1073, deeply influenced by his mentor and namesake, and fully intent on enacting a reformist agenda at the expense of the Holy Roman Emperor.

With all three rival claimants out of the picture, on December 24 Henry III asserted his long-standing imperial prerogative by selecting the new pope, albeit this time from his German entourage. His first choice, Adalbert the archbishop of Bremen, apparently refused the offer and thus Henry turned to another well-trained but close ally, Suidger, bishop of Bamberg and imperial chaplain. On Christmas Day, 1046, Suidger became Pope Clement II and his first official papal action was to crown Henry as emperor. To further solidify the relationship between empire and papacy, Clement bestowed upon Henry the title of *patricius*, essentially defender of the Roman Church, a title that had been granted to Pepin during his coronation by Pope Stephen II, as well as to Otto III at his coronation in 996.¹³ Although the title had mostly fallen out of usage in the intervening half century, its official resuscitation had broad implications for the emperor's relationship with the church, particularly in the selection and election of popes. In granting the emperor the right to cast the first vote in a papal election, and thus to essentially guide the process from the outset, it was designed to thwart the nobles families in Rome from meddling in papal politics, but it also set a precedent about who was really in charge of both papal elections and the church as a whole. Indeed, it was Henry himself who nominated not only Clement II, but also his next three successors, all of them German bishops: Damascus II (Poppo of Brixen), Leo IX (Bruno of Toul), and Victor II (Gebhard of Eichstätt). As we will see below, Henry's appointments initiated a vibrant era of papal reform, beginning particularly with Leo IX and culminating, in the eleventh century, with Gregory VII. In fact, Henry's interest in reform-minded popes probably did more to ensure that the papacy would free itself from both Roman noble and German imperial control than anything else, setting the stage for, at times, violent political rivalry that would engulf northern Italy in particular as it became a battleground in the struggle for political and ecclesiastical dominance.

EARLY STRUGGLES BETWEEN PAPACY AND EMPIRE

Weak imperial control after the death of Henry III in 1056 and during Henry IV's minority led to serious problems because northern Italy and the Roman Church were left on their own, and this period coincided with an ascendant, reformist

papacy. As Henry IV was only 6 years old when his father died, his regency, which lasted until he came of age in 1065, informally meant the loss of the *patricius* right of papal nomination, which of course suited reforming clerics well and further aided the coming split between empire and papacy. In fact, Henry III's last papal appointment, Victor II, died only a year after the king and when his German successor, Stephen IX died almost immediately after his election, the new pope, Nicholas II, was elected without any consultation with the crown whatsoever. These changes would have an enormous impact when Henry IV came to power and attempted to reassert what had been understood to be traditional imperial rights with respect to both episcopal and papal nominations.

When Henry IV (1056–1106) formally took over his duties of kingship in 1065, his first order of business was to attempt to reassert the imperial power that had lapsed during his regency and this program ultimately brought him into open conflict with the reforming pope, Gregory VII. In addition, Henry spent the next 10 years increasing royal holdings particularly at the expense of the Saxon nobility. Although he was mostly successful, Henry's gains fostered a deep-seated resentment of royal power among his dukes who continually sought a way to curb these incursions of the crown on their noble prerogatives. They found such a way by joining in the mostly inevitable clash between king and pope that specifically arose over the issue of episcopal investment but morphed into a contentious debate regarding royal and papal supremacy.

Another factor in the conflict between empire and papacy, also connected in part to the long regency of the new king, was the papacy's shift away from reliance upon German protection during its political disputes with the noble factions in Rome and with larger political powers such as the Byzantines. In the absence of strong imperial control and protection, the papacy turned to a new power in the south, the Normans, for protection. In 1059, under Pope Nicholas II, a feudal relationship was established between powerful nobles, such as Robert Guiscard, and the papacy, which granted the Normans control over lands in southern Italy and Sicily (even if not directly controlled by the papacy) in return for their pledge to support and protect the church in general and the pope in particular. In making his oath, Robert vowed:

I will support the holy Roman church in holding and acquiring the temporalities and possessions of St. Peter everywhere and against all men, and I will help you to hold the Roman papacy securely and honorably . . . I will put all churches in my lordship and their possessions under your power and I will defend them as one faithful to the Roman church; and I will not swear fealty to anyone without reserving the fealty owed to the Roman church . . . [and] I will assist in the election and consecration of a pope to the honor of St. Peter according to the advice of leading cardinals and of the Roman clergy and people. All these things I will

observe with due fidelity to the Roman church and to you, and I will observe this fidelity to your successors.¹⁴

Robert's oath clearly demonstrates the subordinate nature of the secular power as both servant and defender of the church. In a clear reversal of the imperial tradition of royal control over episcopal appointment and investment, Robert ceded his authority over churches in his lands to the pope, a tacit acknowledgment that he essentially protected those churches but did not control them. This oath also usurped the imperial tradition of papal nomination by acknowledging the primacy of the cardinals in selecting the new pope and, perhaps anticipating the accompanying imperial displeasure, obligated Robert, and thus the Normans, to defend and uphold the elections. This new relationship effectively nullified the protective role that the emperor had enjoyed since the time of the Carolingians and in doing so also granted the papacy access to battle-hardened troops that were not German.

It was perhaps this Norman protection, in conjunction with his reforming ideology, which compelled Gregory VII to openly advocate a doctrine of papal supremacy, particularly with respect to the German emperor. In keeping with reforming trends begun under Leo IX, and discussed at length in the following chapter, Gregory asserted that the election of bishops and abbots was entirely an ecclesiastical matter. So when Henry IV, fresh off of the defeat of his Saxon rivals, invested the new archbishop of Milan in 1072, the emperor and pope were destined to clash and they would do so in a radically different religious and political atmosphere than existed a generation earlier. As the spirit of papal reform swept through the northern Italian cities, especially Milan, wealthy clergy, often nobles invested by the emperor, were targeted by lay reformers who opposed their rich and often simoniacal lifestyles. Known as the *Patarini* in Milan and its environs, they elected a rival archbishop with papal support to counter the imperial one and violent street fighting ensued.¹⁵

Gregory also tried to undermine Henry's support with his German bishops by claiming that they were knowingly dismissing his efforts to reform clerical morals and abolish simony. In a letter to Otto, bishop of Constance, in 1074, Gregory reproached the bishop for not cracking down on clerical concubinage and fornication, claiming that Otto was in fact responsible for encouraging such behavior because of his laxity. Moreover, in an explicit attempt to assert the primacy of the papacy in religious and moral matters, Gregory was shocked "that a bishop should despise the decrees of the Apostolic See . . . nay more, by orders from his high place and his priestly office should impose upon his subjects things contrary and repugnant to the Christian faith."¹⁶ Gregory's attack on episcopal immorality and disobedience was more than just an attack on ecclesiastical behavior, it was also an overt criticism of the individual who had approved and invested these

men: Henry IV. So began what has been termed the Investiture Struggle, starting with Gregory VII and Henry IV in 1074 and culminating, mostly, in a resolution at the Concordat of Worms in 1122.

A basic outline of the key events will be helpful here to understand the widespread impact the newly empowered reforming papacy had on Italian, German, and even western European politics for the next few centuries. Asserting his position as leader of the entire Christian church, Gregory took issue not only with Henry's meddling in Milanese episcopal elections but also of those in Fermo and Spoleto. Despite several claims of humility throughout, Gregory's letter to Henry in December 1075 in fact opened with a greeting that immediately asserted papal supremacy and "the understanding that he [Henry] obeys the Apostolic See as becomes a Christian king."¹⁷ The rest of the letter continued its humble admonishment of Henry's "improper" ecclesiastical appointments and ended by encouraging the emperor to mend his ways and submit to the authority of St. Peter's heir. Henry subsequently called an assembly of German bishops where he denounced Gregory as not Pope but a "false monk" who had usurped the divine order of kingship by arrogantly placing himself above the anointed emperor. After claiming that Gregory had immorally used the papacy for his own gain, Henry called on the Pope to step down. Gregory's response in February 1076 was to depose Henry "of the government over the whole kingdom of Germany and Italy" and to "release all Christian men from the allegiance which they have sworn to him."¹⁸ This was a shrewd move by Gregory, for it essentially encouraged Henry's restless German dukes to openly rebel against him, and with papal support. It also indicated the potential for the pope to meddle in German politics the way the emperors had done with papal politics previously.

Deposed, excommunicated, and faced with a massive uprising, Henry was essentially forced to concede to Gregory's position as supreme pontiff. As such, in a famous episode, Henry crossed the Alps during the harsh winter of January 1077 to meet Gregory at the papal castle in Canossa. After standing in the snow barefoot and wearing sackcloth for three days begging Gregory's forgiveness, the pope was basically obligated to accept Henry's penance. The immediate effect was that Henry was restored to power and his excommunication was lifted, effectively neutralizing the growing princely rebellion back in Germany. But Gregory's actions also indicated the extensive powers of the papacy and its perceived supremacy over secular kings.

Unfortunately for Gregory, his attempts at papal supremacy did not last long. Once Henry was restored to power, he immediately used his newfound papal alliance to crush the German rebellion. He also continued to invest and dispose of church positions and property, in direct defiance of Gregory's ban on investiture. The result was a second, albeit delayed, excommunication and banning of Henry in 1080, with far less dramatic results. Although Gregory threw

his support behind a German antiking, Henry had many more allies this time around. Indeed he was able to nominate his own pope, Clement III, in the same year, although it took until 1084 for Henry to enter Rome with Clement and have him officially installed. Even though a few short years before he had deposed one of the great rulers of western Europe, Gregory died in 1085 abandoned by both the Roman populace and in fact many of the cardinals.¹⁹ This first major contest between pope and emperor, between sacred and secular, ended in a draw. On the one hand, Henry became the victor simply by outmaneuvering Gregory at the end. But on the other hand, the papacy as a whole emerged as a formidable challenger to imperial hegemony. Gregory's deposition of Henry set the stage for the increasing power of the papacy that would culminate a little over a century later in the reign of Pope Innocent III who would, in fact, excommunicate not only a later German emperor but also the kings of England and France. This dramatic increase in papal power would also be the source of increasing criticism by both reformers and heretics who saw in it a worldliness unbecoming of the successor to Jesus' poor apostles.

Imperial and papal struggles in both Italy and Germany continued under Henry's son, Henry V. Although at the beginning of his reign Henry V appeared to be disavowing the antipapal stance of his father (he actively rebelled with princely and papal support against his father), he ultimately continued the imperial legacy of both investiture and of challenging papal supremacy. When Pope Paschal II renewed the prohibition against lay investiture at a synod in 1106 he began a process of negotiations between pope and emperor that, by 1111, appeared to provide for a compromise between the two powers. The proposal by Paschal, perhaps influenced by the large army that Henry had entered Italy with ostensibly for his coronation, called for the emperor to abandon investiture while in return the church would give up the so-called regalian rights (imperial church lands and the jurisdictions that came with them). As the negotiations for the agreement were done in secret very few of the German bishops knew the details and an understandable uproar occurred when they learned of the loss of land holdings while attending the imperial coronation. The outrage was so intense that the ceremony could not be completed and without his coronation, Henry refused to abide by the agreement. In fact, he ultimately arrested the pope and several cardinals. Held prisoner by Henry outside of Rome, Paschal had no choice but to give in to Henry's new demands, which included an unhindered imperial right of investiture and coronation, which then took place several weeks later.²⁰

When Henry returned to Italy, starting in 1116, he again undertook two actions that would complicate matters not only between empire and papacy, but also between empire and northern Italian cities. When Mathilda, Countess of Tuscany, died in 1115, she named Henry V as her heir and he stood to acquire massive amounts of lands, both imperial fiefs and allodial lands (those held free

of any service obligation), in and around central Italy. On the way to assume lordship over these lands, Henry made the decision to curry favor with many of the Italian cities by granting them significant imperial privileges. This approach worked for him at the time because it bought him the support of many urban centers but these privileges would also empower the cities to ultimately resist imperial authority under his successors.²¹

Henry V's second action was the nomination of an antipope, Gregory VIII, in spring 1118, after Pope Paschal had died and his successor, Gelasius II, was forced by proimperial factions among the Roman nobility to flee the city. Protected in part by those papal allies, the Normans, Gelasius issued a decree of excommunication against Henry. Although it did not have the dramatic impact of the excommunication of his father, nevertheless it did move many German princes and a fair number of German bishops to openly oppose Henry's imperial plans and seek to depose him. This maneuver forced Henry to both return to Germany and to seek some sort of compromise with Gelasius over the long-simmering issue of investiture. Empire and papacy ultimately reached an agreement by the autumn of 1122, known as the Concordat of Worms, whereby the emperor gave up the investiture of bishops and abbots with the ring and the staff while also allowing for free canonical elections. In return, the emperor was granted the right that these elections in Germany would take place in his presence, and also the right to bestow upon the bishop the scepter, symbolizing the temporal possessions such as land, towns, castles given by the emperor in exchange for fealty and service.²²

The conflict over investiture was mostly resolved by the Concordat of Worms, at least for several decades. This is not to say that all was well between the two camps, since disputes over territory and land holdings continued, at times breaking into armed conflict. Rather, it was a relative peace in terms of religious spheres of influence, not surprisingly, also coincided with a waning of direct imperial power in both northern Italy and Germany. From the end of Henry V's reign, the German princes and indeed many of the imperial bishops desired an emperor that was less ambitious and that stayed out of their affairs. Accordingly, after the end of the Salian dynasty, the imperial successors, Lothar III (r.1125–38) and Conrad III (r.1138–52) were elected by the princes with the understanding that a compromise between imperial and princely power must be achieved, usually in favor of the princes.²³ Moreover, the 50-year-old Lothar had no male heirs so there was no threat of establishing a ruling dynasty like that of his Salian predecessors. In terms of papal relations, a tendency toward imperial weakness is also evident, especially under Lothar. For example, when Lothar went to Rome for his imperial coronation, choosing to side with Pope Innocent II and not his rival Anacletus III, he undertook actions that would be damaging for his claims to power and supremacy, as well as those of his successors. First, in an apparent act of deference and respect, when emperor and pope met at Liège, Lothar led

the pope's horse and held his stirrup while he mounted, then escorted the pontiff back to Rome. Second, and perhaps more importantly, once crowned, Lothar also accepted from Innocent the Matildine lands to which he had no hereditary claims.²⁴ The interpretation of these two acts, by both Germans back home and the pope and his supporters, was one where the emperor was subservient to the pope and indeed appeared to be receiving his lands and his imperial crown as a vassal of the pontiff.

To reinforce this notion of imperial submission, Innocent had a mural of the events created in a chapel of the Lateran palace that apparently combined the notions of fealty, submission, and papal supremacy. According to Ian Stuart Robinson, the pope:

appears enthroned, crowned and wearing ceremonial garments; he raises up the kneeling Lothar, who is uncrowned and simply clad. It is clear that Innocent enjoys the highest authority on earth: he condescends to the German king, who humbles himself before the papal throne, and raises him to imperial dignity.²⁵

As if the image left any doubt about papal supremacy, it had an inscription that read, in part, that the king "becomes the vassal of the pope and takes the crown which he gives."²⁶ Both the public deference to the pope and the reception of imperial lands as a papal fief clearly indicate that the emperor was in a much weaker position than his immediate predecessors and that the powers of the papal monarchy were intensifying.²⁷

FREDERICK BARBAROSSA, THE PAPACY, AND THE ITALIAN COMMUNES

Unlike Lothar and Conrad, the new emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (1152–90) of the Hohenstaufen line would significantly expand both the territory of the empire and powers of the emperor himself, only to be checked, in Italy at least, by the rise of a new power, the urban communes. Frederick's initial decision to try his fortunes in Italy, rather than attempt to immediately consolidate his power in Germany, was precipitated by the political situation in Germany when he assumed power. Faced with troublesome dukes in Germany proper, his chances to reclaim lost imperial power would be better if he started in the south.

At the beginning of his reign, Frederick sought peace with the papacy, going so far as to enter into an agreement with Pope Eugenius III and the Roman curia in 1153 that became the Treaty of Constance. This treaty laid out a very clear alliance between empire and papacy, where the emperor agreed not to make any deals or negotiations with the Roman people, the Normans, or even the Byzantines, and

to defend the papacy against all enemies. Additionally, the emperor would aid the papacy in asserting control in the city of Rome itself, which had once again erupted in turmoil. In return, the pope would perform the imperial coronation but more importantly would assist with the extension of imperial power in Germany and Italy (except for the Papal States) by using the influence of the papacy against any opponents of Frederick's imperial authority. Although Eugenius died before Frederick's coronation, the treaty was reaffirmed between the emperor and Pope Adrian IV during the ceremony in 1155. As a sign of his commitment to the papacy, when the leaders of the Roman commune offered to crown Frederick, he not only angrily refused (his right to rule did not depend on a mob!) but also took steps to put an end to the communal uprising led, in part, by Arnold of Brescia, an ardent, populist reformer who chastised the Roman Church for abandoning its apostolic poverty. Arnold was captured by imperial troops, tried for sedition, and hanged, his body burnt and his ashes scattered into the Tiber River. The rebellion that broke out in Rome on the day of the imperial coronation was also put down by Frederick's troops.

Despite this initial alliance, in just two short years a rift would begin to grow between emperor and pope over the issue of feudal supremacy. The rift began, in part, through a possible misunderstanding of terminology at an imperial diet at Besançon in 1157. At the meeting two papal legates delivered a letter to the emperor that said, in part, that the empire was granted to him by the pope as a benefice. The word used in this case, *beneficium*, can be translated in two ways: somewhat innocuously as a benefit or, in a more politically volatile sense as a fief.²⁸ The translation delivered to the emperor, the bishops, and the German princes was the latter. Most of the attendees were outraged that the pope would dare to imply that he considered himself a feudal lord over Frederick. To make matters worse, one of the papal legates asked, "From whom then does he have the empire, if not from our lord the pope?"²⁹ This comment almost cost the legate his life at the hand of enraged princes. Perhaps because Frederick was not heavy-handed with the German churches or perhaps due to a fear of papal overreach, even the bishops were firmly on the emperor's side and with such solid support, the pope had to apologize and clarify that he meant the word simply as a benefit.³⁰ Frederick himself claimed that his position as emperor was divinely sanctioned and that he, in fact, received his authority directly from God and thus it was beyond the control of the papacy.

This misunderstanding, intentional or not, illustrates that the issue of political supremacy had not been entirely settled at Worms. By 1158, only 5 years after the agreement at Constance, the Emperor could not count on the pope for any support whatsoever because Adrian had made peace settlements and alliances with both the Byzantines and the Normans, in direct violation of the treaty. The rift would continue under Adrian's successor, Alexander III, and the struggle

between papal and imperial power would do much to reshape the political landscape in northern Italy.

It was in this new political environment that both Barbarossa's greatest successes and worst failures took place: communal Lombardy. As far back as his initial Italian campaign of 1154–5, Frederick tried to work with the Italian cities to bring them smoothly under his imperial control. For example, the city of Milan, perhaps the most powerful city in all of Lombardy, exerted its influence over nearby cities, such as Pavia and Piacenza. When Frederick arrived, these subordinate cities lodged complaints with the emperor against the city of Milan. In order to fairly judge the dispute, Frederick called for a meeting between the parties. When Milan's representatives failed to show up, the emperor placed the city under imperial ban. However, this decision was somewhat toothless and unenforceable because the emperor had entered Italy with only a small army, not one necessary to take on the defenses of a great city like Milan. Moreover, the emperor's immediate goal was to reach Rome for the imperial coronation.

In 1158, during Frederick's return trip to Italy, the emperor began a series of actions that would consolidate imperial rule in northern Italy, at least for almost two decades. Although the ultimate result would be the near-complete loss of imperial control over the Lombard cities, with a larger army than the first campaign, Frederick was able to lay siege to and capture the city of Milan, partial punishment for its disobedience 3 years earlier. As part of this settlement, Frederick demanded loyalty oaths from most of the male citizens while also requiring that all communal officials be imperially confirmed in their positions. After exerting this show of strength, Frederick called an imperial diet at Roncaglia where he sought to reassess imperial rights in the kingdom of Italy. Employing Italian legal scholars from several cities and following his example at Milan, one goal was the reinstatement of the right of the emperor to oversee the appointment of all positions of authority, not just in Milan but throughout the kingdom of Italy. This obvious attempt to check the growing power and independence of the communes was Frederick's way of, presumably legally, reasserting imperial rights in the hope of averting the power struggles that had plagued the German emperors with respect to the princes. The emperor could ill-afford to have restless and powerful subjects in both Italy and Germany. His second goal was the clarification of the *regalia*, which were a complex grouping of rights granted by emperors but lately simply assumed by the communes, the bishops, or the rural nobility. These *regalia* included the possession of duchies and counties, permission to collect judicial fines, tolls, and poll-taxes, and the right to mint coins and build palaces, among others. Frederick demanded that legal proof be provided that the current holders of these privileges held them legally and, if so, they reimburse the emperor for them.³¹

The decrees of Roncaglia did in fact increase imperial centralization over the course of close to two decades, as well as pad the imperial coffers with

much-needed funds.³² Ironically, Frederick's successes would in fact pave the way for imperial losses at the hands of energized and powerful communes. One of the first cities to oppose the new imperial decrees was Milan, apparently nowhere near as subdued as the emperor would have liked. Allied with other cities like Crema, Brescia, and even its former adversary Piacenza, Milan openly rebelled against Frederick's imposition of imperial authority. The rebellion was also aided by none other than Pope Adrian IV, who lent his support to the opposition. When Adrian died in late 1159, a schism developed between the two papal candidates, the pro-imperial Victor IV (ultimately supported by Frederick) and the decidedly anti-imperial Alexander III. Frederick's stance against Alexander may have stemmed, in part, from his role as one of the two papal legates at Besançon that delivered the ill-received *beneficium* letter. In any case, Alexander's ardent anti-imperialist stance made him a natural ally of the rebellious Milanese and their allies.

Despite this papal support, imperial forces aided by loyal Italian cities such as Pavia, decisively crushed Milan and its other allies in 1162 after a long siege. They first expelled most of the populace within the old city walls, then began systematic burning and destruction, quarter by quarter. This show of imperial strength was intended to send a message to the other Italian cities that they would suffer the same fate as Milan if they did not fall into line. Unfortunately for Frederick, it had the opposite effect and instead galvanized opposition to the emperor, drawing together even cities that had been bitter enemies for generations. The immediate result was the formation of the Lombard League, a coalition of cities united in their distrust of imperial power. An earlier league, which included Verona, Padua, and Vicenza and initially supported by the Byzantine emperor Manuel I to check German imperial power in the Italian peninsula merged with the Lombard League, thereby increasing its power and resources. The new league could also count on the support of Pope Alexander III and even the king of Norman Sicily. The coalition of forces arrayed against the German emperor was substantial enough that Frederick had to put together a massive army of over 10,000 knights, supplemented by mercenaries, in 1166 for his fourth Italian campaign.

Initially successful, Frederick's fourth military expedition ended in disaster while his fifth expedition ended in humiliating defeat. Between 1166 and late summer 1167, Frederick marched his armies south to Rome, where they decisively defeated Pope Alexander and his Roman allies, forcing the pontiff to flee. After installing a new pro-imperial pope (Paschal III) and having him crown Frederick's wife as empress, a terrible fate befell the imperial troops that were suddenly and viciously brought down by an outbreak of plague or possibly malaria. With thousands dead and his army wiped out almost overnight, Frederick was barely able to escape back to German territory. When the emperor reconstituted his forces and launched yet another invasion of Italy 1174, albeit without some of his earlier

German supporters, the outcome was much worse than plague. In the 3 years since his previous campaign, the city of Milan had been rebuilt with the help of Alexander and the Byzantines, and a new fortified city appeared in the form of Alessandria, named in honor of the pope himself and quite literally a monument to papal power. After an unsuccessful siege of the city and a failed attempt to get more troops, Frederick and the imperial army were routed by the forces of the Lombard League at the Battle of Legnano in 1176. After an initial settlement reconciling the emperor to both the pope and the Lombard cities, a lasting peace accord was finalized at Constance in 1183. Frederick's imperially appointed bishops agreed to recognize Pope Alexander's election and were allowed to retain their positions, effectively ending the schism. For the emperor himself, the Peace of Constance meant Frederick had to concede many of the imperial gains he had achieved via the decrees at Roncaglia some 20 years ago. He thus had to agree to free communal elections and legislation, the communes retaining regalian rights, allowing the cities to build any necessary fortifications and reforming the Lombard League if needed. The emperor did win some concessions as well; he retained overlordship of the cities, the swearing of oaths of fealty by communal magistrates, and the right to invest communes with the *regalia*. Despite his defeat at Legnano and his concessions to the communes, when Frederick died in 1190 while on crusade, he left a very powerful and widespread empire which included Germany, Burgundy, and large swaths of Italy. Perhaps more importantly, he also left a pattern of continued imperial involvement in Italian political affairs that would lead his successors, including his grandson, the future Frederick II, into open conflict with both communal and papal interests.

FREDERICK II: HERETICAL EMPEROR

The last of the emperors to have significant conflicts with the papacy and the communes during the timeframe of this current study was Frederick II (1215–50), last of the Hohenstaufen and one of the last significantly powerful emperors. What made Frederick II so powerful was his inheritance of the Sicilian kingdoms, along with his imperial rights and control over both northern Italy and Germany. Unlike many of his predecessors, outside of his first few years of rule, he spent very little of his reign in Germany, mainly only to pacify the princes in order to consolidate his power elsewhere. That consolidation took place in Sicily, the Holy Land, and Italy, often at the expense of both the Italian communes and the papacy. Interestingly, the beginning of Frederick's reign did not seem to indicate any future conflicts with the papacy, in part because he was raised for some time under the guardianship of Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) after his mother's death. The positive relationship between emperor and pope continued under Innocent's

successor, Honorius III (1216–27), to whom Frederick pledged to go on crusade to the Holy Land.

The rift between emperor and papacy began in part because Frederick repeatedly failed to personally undertake this crusading mission, but also due to the papacy's fear that Frederick was quickly consolidating his Sicilian power base and looking to merge it with the northern Italian imperial holdings. Such a move would put the Papal States in a precarious position, hemmed in on all sides by the Empire. In 1225, Frederick agreed to undertake his crusade no later than late summer 1227 or risk excommunication. The emperor used his vow and papal support to attempt to compel the northern Italian cities to supply troops for the crusade and to accept his imperial control. The communes responded by reforming the defunct Lombard League in 1226 and only backed down, slightly, when the pope intervened.³³ The cities agreed to send several hundred troops but the larger issue of imperial rule was not resolved. When Frederick's opportunity to leave on crusade came in 1227, he failed to depart due to a sudden illness and the new pope, Gregory IX (1227–41), a determined papal monarchist, excommunicated the emperor for failing to fulfill his vow. When Frederick finally left for the Holy Land in June of 1228, he had not been reconciled to the church, and was thus crusading as an excommunicate. Gregory promptly excommunicated the emperor for a second time, but this act did not stop Frederick from arriving in Jerusalem and even negotiating with the powerful sultan of Egypt. The resulting treaty was a great success for Frederick because through it he achieved something that had not been possible since the First Crusade: the reclamation of Jerusalem. Upon his return to Italy in 1230, Frederick crushed a papal army that had moved on his Sicilian holdings, compelling Gregory to seek a peace agreement and a revocation of his excommunication.

With the papacy temporarily subdued, Frederick then focused on restoring imperial order in Sicily and Lombardy. In Sicily, in 1231, Frederick passed the Constitutions of Melfi, which dramatically centralized imperial control over the kingdom. These laws significantly reduced the power of the feudal nobility, who could not sell their fiefs, while the townspeople were barred from electing consuls. Judicially, the towns had to relinquish control of major criminal cases to imperial courts, while the clergy were now subject to common courts. Administratively, this change meant that the emperor was the supreme executive in all things legislative and judicial. This control was further consolidated by the partitioning of Sicily into several provincial units, which were then administered by imperial appointees.

When Frederick sought to transfer this successful model north to Lombardy in late 1231 at an imperial diet in Ravenna, the cities understandably rebelled. It would take until 1237, however, for Frederick to deal with the communes, since his own son, Henry VII, instigated a revolt against him that required him to return

to Germany for an extended period. When the emperor was finally able to invade Italy again, he found a situation similar to what his grandfather, Barbarossa, had faced: a powerful Lombard League, headed by Milan and openly aided by the pope. Fortunately for Frederick, his allied forces, including the Italian cities of Pavia, Verona, Ferrara, and Parma among others, defeated the Milanese in 1237 and imposed harsh terms. The following year imperial forces, aided by troops from as far away as England and Hungary, unsuccessfully laid siege to Brescia and this failure was seized upon in Lombardy, as several more cities joined the rebellion.³⁴ Trying to capitalize on the sentiment against Frederick, Pope Gregory IX again excommunicated the emperor in 1239, which began a new war of words between the papacy and empire that would, in part, unknowingly foster popular apocalyptic sentiments and influence Dolcino and his followers.³⁵

The split between papacy and empire continued and in fact intensified after Gregory's death in 1241 and the ascension of Pope Innocent IV in 1243. Fleeing Rome because of imperial military pressure, Innocent and his papal court sought shelter in Lyons under French protection, where a general church council was called in 1245. The council excommunicated Frederick yet again and more importantly the pope declared him deposed as emperor and king of all his holdings from Sicily to Germany. Innocent also openly supported a rival German king not only in word, but most importantly in terms of money. But the pope did not stop there. He vigorously argued that Frederick was a heretic and ordered that a crusade be launched against him, sending out preachers to deliver the call to arms in much the same terms as had been preached to crusaders to the Holy Land. Those taking up the cross against the wicked emperor would be granted crusading privileges such as remission of sins. Obviously, the crusade was less about eradicating an actual heretic preaching unorthodox doctrine and more about effectively eliminating the pope's imperial rival. According to David Abulafia, this crusade "represents the first large-scale attempt to use the crusade as an instrument for the defeat of the papacy's political enemies within western Europe."³⁶ Apparently, Innocent's questionable rationalization of Frederick's heretical status was less compelling to possible supporters than material benefits, which the pope ultimately had to rely upon. Thus he granted lands to Sicilian nobles and tax exemptions or trade opportunities to towns, in some cases completely disregarding the fact that the pope often did not have the legal right to dispense such privileges in the first place.³⁷ In fact, although many communes supported the pope, mostly out of expediency rather than for any love of the papacy, Innocent mostly failed to garner much support from Frederick's German princes and thus the majority of his crusading troops came from Lombardy.

Frederick's response to Innocent's all-out attack on his character, his faith, and his legitimacy was to try to use the pope's political ambitions against him and it is here that we see the very public use of the concept of apostolic poverty as

an effective criticism of papal power. Criticism of the wealth and, in some cases, military strength of bishops had been around since at least the time of the Pataria in the eleventh century and it evolved to direct challenges to the seat of St. Peter.³⁸ The main thrust of this view was that the church, and the pope in particular, had strayed too far from its apostolic and spiritual mission to become nothing more than a worldly institution concerned only with temporal and banal goals such as wealth and power. This criticism, as we shall see in the following chapters, was taken up by reforming, yet orthodox movements as well as those later labeled heretical, like the Waldensians, Cathars, and, of course, the Apostles.

In a letter to all the kings of Christendom in 1246, Frederick raised these very same issues in order to prove that the papacy as a whole, and Innocent IV in particular, were abusing their spiritual powers for base, personal ends. Frederick began his letter by immediately suggesting to the other European kings that his treatment at the hands of the pope was not a one-time occurrence but could, at any time, happen to them as well. He claimed that all kings and rulers “had everything to fear from the effrontery of such a prince of priests when he sets out to depose us who have been divinely honored by the imperial diadem and solemnly elected by the princes with the approval of the whole church.” He added that, “we are not the first nor shall we be the last that this abuse of priestly power harasses and strives to cast down.”³⁹ Here Frederick was clearly drawing attention to the pope’s hunger for secular power through his choice of words, especially “prince of priests.” Frederick then specifically tied papal goals to avarice while contrasting them with the “true” nature of the apostolic church:

The copious revenues with which they are enriched by the impoverishment of many kingdoms, as you yourself know, make them rage like madmen . . . [T]he lavishness of these greedy men expends the riches of the poor . . . [I]t was always our intention to persuade the clergy of every degree that they should continue to the end as they were in the early days of the church living an apostolic life and imitating the Lord’s humility and that is was our intention to reduce those of the highest rank to this condition . . . they used to heal the sick, raise the dead and subject kings and princes to themselves by holiness, not by arms. But these, drunk with the pleasures of the world and devoted to them, set aside God, and all true religion is choked by their surfeit of riches and power. Hence, to deprive such men of the baneful wealth that burdens them to their own damnation is a work of charity.⁴⁰

Although the other kings addressed by Frederick’s letter ultimately did not come to his aid, the emperor’s depiction of the pope nevertheless provided a compelling argument for those opposed to papal power on the grounds that papal armies, massive revenues, and the deposition of emperors were not things that a humble,

apostolic, and poor church would undertake. By highlighting this distinction, Frederick was very obviously calling into question the validity of the Innocent's papacy.

The contest between emperor and papacy ended abruptly when Frederick died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1250. The war with the Lombard cities saw many imperial victories but never enough to overcome the League and its allies, and his death all but ended imperial efforts to subdue the northern Italian cities. The strength of imperial leaders like Frederick II and his grandfather, Barbarossa, also died with the emperor, and Hohenstaufen power in the north ceased to exist when Frederick's son, Conrad, died 4 years later. One reason for the waning of imperial power in Italy was due to the German princes refusing to elect a strong emperor who could possibly infringe upon their rights and territories. Instead, the princes played various foreign claimants off against one another and it was almost a quarter century before an agreed-upon emperor, albeit an entirely powerless one, was elected. The lack of imperial designs on northern Italy essentially left the communes on their own but without the emperor's armies and the threat to civic independence that they posed, many of the Italian alliances fell apart, keeping Italy factionalized into opposing city-states for centuries to come.

CONCLUSION

The struggle between empire and papacy from the eleventh through thirteenth centuries completely changed the religious and political landscape of Europe in general and northern Italy in particular. From the beginnings of reform under Henry III, the papacy slowly grew in power and prestige until it was able to not only command armies but, through the deposition and excommunication of emperors, to command obedience as well. Assuming many of the same powers and prerogatives as traditional monarchs, these newly empowered popes raised vast sums of cash, negotiated with heads of state, called the faithful to crusade, and expanded the keys of St. Peter into a vast papal bureaucracy. While this may have been a positive development from the perspective of popes such as Gregory VII and both Innocent III and IV, an unexpected side effect was a growing perception, fostered by reformers and emperors alike, that such monarchical claims were a far cry from the apostolic, poor, and communal church of centuries before. It was this discrepancy, coupled with increasingly secular aims of popes that fostered both reform and rebellion, each of these intent on purifying what some saw as a terrible corruption of the apostolic model.

These papal and imperial clashes also inadvertently helped the communes accelerate their own power and influence on the region. As imperial and papal interests diverged, the lucrative Lombard cities became, on the one hand, a

battleground between the two sides and saw decades of brutal warfare as the cities allied with one side or another. But there were benefits to be had as well. The city-states also played empire and papacy off against one another for their own gain, which included numerous concessions that increased communal power and independence, freeing many communes from noble and episcopal control. Siding with empire or papacy also led to the development within Italy of two distinct, rival political factions: the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Although the terms initially signified support for one German clan over another, the Welfs and the Waiblingens respectively, in Italy the names generally came to signify papal (Guelph) and imperial (Ghibelline) factions. It is difficult to generalize about these two factions because their interests and goals varied between communes and often depended on which force, papal or imperial, was more of a threat to communal independence. In terms of broad trends, many Guelph supporters tended to have stronger merchant ties, while many Ghibelline supporters were more aligned with the rural, feudal nobility. Still, it appears that the primary consideration for aligning with Guelph or Ghibelline parties was less ideological and more practical: would the emperor or the pope be the better ally for leaders of any given commune? Due to this political expediency some cities that had been firmly imperial, such as Parma, were convinced to switch sides through a combination of papal concessions and large sums of cash.⁴¹ Thus, although Guelph and Ghibelline were indeed factions, particularly in Florence, it is probably more accurate to use the terms propapal and proimperial. In any case, rival political factions in the communes contributed to the tumultuous political and religious environment in northern Italy, making it a hotbed of conflicting alliances and ideologies. It was in precisely such an environment that the Order of Apostles would find both its most ardent supporters and bitterest of enemies.

Church Reform and its Aftermath

If the German Emperor Henry III had witnessed the struggle between empire and papacy from the rise of his successor through the death of Frederick Barbarossa, he would have been dumbfounded. In Henry III's lifetime, the papacy and empire were allies, working together to rid the church of its undesirable elements such as clerical marriage and concubinage, widespread purchase of ecclesiastical offices by men who were appallingly unqualified, and a general moral laxity among supposed men of God. The emperor and his reform-minded papal appointee were partners in this sense. Yet it was the very push for ecclesiastical reform that gave birth to the idea of a church independent from secular control. As reform led to independence, independence led to notions of papal supremacy, which culminated in one of the strongest and most influential popes of the High Middle Ages, Innocent III, the epitome of the papal monarch. But the method of reform also led to unforeseen consequences for the papacy as well. As popes from Gregory VII to Innocent IV struggled with their imperial foes, they often appealed to the laity to generate sympathy and understanding of their reform movement, hoping to win the faithful over to their side. In doing so, they exposed the laity to reforming principles and in many cases encouraged them to assist in reform, for example, by reporting simoniacal priests.

While this approach seemed wise at the time, the reformers inadvertently fostered an awareness among the laity that ecclesiastical abuses should be sought out, publicly revealed, and corrected for the good of the church. Of course, the problem with this lay involvement was that as the papacy became more of an ecclesiastical monarchy, it appeared to many laypersons that it was deviating from the message of the early reformers who emphasized poverty and purity as they sought to return the church to its apostolic roots. This apparent discrepancy thus became an easy target for those who considered the church of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries far too worldly.

The beginnings of reform in the eleventh century stem, in part, from the negative public image that plagued the church, particularly in Italy, from the papal level all the way down to parish priests. At the top, the papacy of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries was noted for its scandalous leaders. Pope John XII, initially an ally of Otto I but later deposed by him, was accused of all sorts of unseemly activities such as murder and fornication. Of course, Benedict IX tops

the list of popes engaged in sordid deeds, with numerous accusations ranging from adultery, rape, and murder, to selling the papal seat itself. There was also the matter of Benedict's lack of training to hold such a high position. When Emperor Henry III entered the fray surrounding the existence of three simultaneous popes in 1046, the papacy was much less a spiritual office concerned with the care of souls, as it was a prestigious administrative position that was coveted by feuding Roman aristocratic families. The lower priestly orders suffered many of the same problems, as many of them had acquired their positions via simony and investiture by unscrupulous laymen. Indeed, many priests and bishops were simply feudal lords who had the right connections to be appointed but none of the religious training to fulfill their actual duties. Charges of moral laxity were widespread as well, since many priests lived openly with their wives or concubines, or engaged in other morally questionable activities. These issues became the initial focus of the new breed of reformers in the middle of the eleventh century.

EARLY EXAMPLES OF REFORM

Although the economic and social changes sweeping Europe beginning in the eleventh century made the issues of simony and investiture much more prominent, reform did not suddenly begin with Pope Leo IX in 1049. Several waves of reform had engulfed the church in the preceding centuries, usually with the same goal: a return to the perceived simplicity and purity of the early apostolic church. One of the most significant, pre-Leonine reforms was that of the monastery at Cluny, founded in 910 with the assistance of the duke, William of Aquitaine. Several things separated Cluny from other monastic orders, chief among them being its absolute independence from outside control other than that of the pope. In its founding charter, the monastery was not answerable to any local ecclesiastical or feudal authorities, could freely elect its own abbot, and owned its land free of the traditional service dues.¹ As the Cluniac model spread to other monastic houses that adopted its rule or founded completely new monasteries, it maintained its organizational independence from local bishops who would normally have some control over monasteries in their dioceses. In fact, even though the charter technically placed Cluny under papal control, in reality the popes of the late tenth and early eleventh century were more focused on their immediate environs in Rome and surrounding areas.² The lack of direct papal oversight meant Cluny was free to administer its own affairs with virtually no interference.

Cluny's reforms and its independence are also significant for broader church reform since many of the leading Leonine reformers, including several popes, hailed from or were otherwise associated with Cluniac monasteries. Among these were Humbert, cardinal bishop of Silva Candida, Frederick, brother of

Duke William of Aquitaine and abbot of Monte Cassino, who was elected Pope Stephen IX (1057–8), Pope Nicholas II (1058–61), and, perhaps most importantly, Hildebrand, who became Pope Gregory VII.³ All these individuals would play key roles in reform efforts and, significantly, their religious and political outlooks were directly influenced by the uniqueness of Cluny's administration, which goes a long way toward explaining why they pushed so hard for papal authority and independence from lay control.

The cycle of monastic reform continued in Europe, typically following a pattern of responding to perceived idleness and laxity of existing orders. The Cistercians, for example, founded in 1098 by Robert of Molesme, originated in part due to a sense that the Cluniacs, especially those at Cluny itself, had themselves grown too rich and comfortable over time, particularly from monies they received from pilgrims or from the vast lands they owned. In the typical spirit of reform, Robert's monastery founded at Cîteaux sought to return to the rigors of the Benedictine rule and, unlike the Cluniacs who focused on liturgical worship, aimed to make manual labor the centerpiece of Cistercian life. In conjunction with an emphasis on apostolic poverty (monks were allowed only one garment and a limited diet, while the buildings, altars, and even the chalices and crucifixes had to be simple and plain), the monasteries were to be located on uncultivated or unused land to allow for the monks to labor. By clearing fields and draining swamps, the Cistercians used their focused labor to bring unused land under cultivation and to provide for the monastic community.⁴ Like their reforming predecessors, the Cistercians responded to the worldliness of those around them, even other monks, by advocating a lifestyle that clearly connected apostolic poverty with spiritual perfection and salvation. The very existence of such groups continually highlighted, intentionally or not, the wealth of those around them, which seemed suspect, especially if those wealthy individuals were ecclesiastics. Regarding this connection between monastic reform and poverty, R. I. Moore's summation is particularly apt: "Dissociation from the stain of earthly riches was the hall-mark of the new spirit."⁵

LEONINE REFORMS

Seen in this context, the major reforms begun under Leo IX had many of the same goals as earlier monastic reformers: a return to apostolic purity coupled with independence from secular and worldly influences. Leo himself began the reform in earnest by holding an unprecedented 12 synods in his short 5-year reign as pope. These reform councils were held in various parts of Christendom from Rome to Reims and unlike his predecessors, he travelled far and wide spreading his message of reforming ecclesiastical abuses. In his first year alone he travelled

to France and Germany, and indeed Leo spent very little of his tenure in the city of Rome itself. As it was so unusual, his very public travels piqued the interest of clergy and laity alike and went a long way in promoting the international reach of the papacy. Attention was also drawn to these otherwise mundane proceedings because of certain incredible events that took place that seemed to indicate that Leo was indeed dispensing divine justice. The most famous incident occurred at the pope's first synod in Rome where he very publicly denounced the bishop of Sutri as a simonist. When the bishop stood to offer his defense, he immediately fell over dead.⁶ Stories like this, coupled with frequent papal travels made the papacy a concrete and formidable entity in the minds of the faithful, particularly for those outside of Italy for whom the pope had been literally and figuratively distant. As Uta-Renate Blumenthal has argued, "Under Leo IX, almost overnight, the papacy became a living and ever-present reality for all Christians."⁷

Another way Leo and his reformers made an impact was through their dogged efforts to cleanse the church of its more tainted fellows. The reformers focused on a few key areas that were seen as the most detrimental to clergy fulfilling their pastoral duties: nicolaitism (clerical marriage), concubinage, simony, and investiture. Leo himself took aim at these practices at his first synod in the Lateran palace in 1049. In a sweeping judgment, Leo condemned any bishops who had acquired their posts due to simony and immediately ordered them deposed if they could not disprove the charge. More significantly, he also mandated that all consecrations performed by such bishops were thereby invalidated. However, such a drastic approach would have widespread and devastating consequences for the clergy, an untold number of whom might have been unknowingly consecrated by a simoniacal bishop. Due to the outcry from other church members, Leo softened his approach somewhat and, following an earlier decree, allowed these bishops to retain their positions only after a period of penance.⁸ Even still, the assault on clerical abuses had begun and it would quickly take a very public route.

The pope was assisted in his efforts by the zeal of fellow reformers such as Peter Damian and Humbert of Silva Candida, two cardinals under Leo. Both men wrote several tracts and letters attacking simony and calling for a purification of the clergy. In a letter to cardinal-bishop Boniface of Albano, Peter Damian condemned simonists as greedy for the power their ill-gotten position afforded them, saying "they are avid only for pre-eminence in commanding and ruling . . . [and] these men, who do not enter church through the door but by a worldly back-way, become thieves and robbers, not shepherds of sheep."⁹ The problem they addressed was twofold: the purchase of an ecclesiastical office was at once a sinful violation of church law and also engaged in by those who had little if any pastoral (let alone liturgical) skills or training. Thus they were an affront to God and to the laity (or lesser clergy in the case of simoniacal bishops), putting both their souls and those of their subordinates at risk.

Humbert, Peter Damian's colleague, despised simony for many of the same reasons, but also directed his wrath at the process of investiture that he saw as further invalidating episcopal appointments. His work, *Adversus Simoniacos* (1054–8), laid out his criticism of lay investiture and clearly set the adversarial tone that would come to dominate the crisis as it unfolded under Gregory VII. For Humbert, lay investiture improperly bypassed church protocol and subverted the consecration process that required, first, election by the clergy, then a request of the people, and finally consecration by the provincial bishop, himself under the authority of the pope. Without such due process, anyone invested by lay authorities “is not to be regarded as a true, undoubted, established bishop.”¹⁰ He then accused rulers who usurped proper ecclesiastical regulation and authority of willfully trampling the rights of the church and the people. At its core Humbert's argument hinged not only on the legal process of investiture but also on his conception of the proper relationship between secular and priestly power. The analogy he used in comparing the two was that the priestly power represented the soul, while royal power represented the body, each one needing the other to survive. His formulation, unsurprisingly, elevated the soul above that of the body so that “just as the soul excels the body and commands it, so too the priestly dignity excels the royal or, we may say, the heavenly dignity the earthly.”¹¹ Such was the proper ordering of the world, where the kings followed the lead of the priests and the laity followed that of the king. Of course, any deviation from this pattern threatened to disrupt all of society and since lay investiture upended the natural order, it had to be seen as a threat to a stable and functioning world.

Despite similarities in their reforming ideas, Peter Damian and Humbert did disagree over an important aspect of simony and lay investiture: the validity of the sacraments administered by such priests and bishops. Peter Damian's position was that although simony itself was a tainted and unacceptable means to become an ecclesiastic, it did not in any way affect the sacred duties performed by these individuals and the sacrament remained innately holy separate from the “personal worthiness” of the priest.¹² He was challenged in this regard by his fellow reformer, Humbert, who was far more critical of the effects of simony, going so far as to claim that a simonist was never truly ordained in the first place. Essentially, Humbert argued that if simony was the sin and heresy that the church claimed it to be, it must have an effect on the rites performed, which was to render the ordinations and sacraments void.¹³ In this regard, he edged dangerously close to the heretical Donatists because he argued that even the priests ordained by a simoniacal bishop were not truly ordained, even if they had no knowledge of the bishop's transgression. Fortunately for the numerous priests in this position, Humbert's argument found little support, while Peter Damian's point of punishing the sin of simoniacal appointment but not the sacraments that flowed from it won the day.¹⁴ But the fact remained that there was indeed an argument to be

made, even by theologians like Humbert, that openly questioned the sacramental power of unworthy priests and bishops. When these arguments filtered down to the laity, as they would shortly, the finer distinctions between unworthy priest yet worthy sacrament would be lost, leading to outbreaks of anticlerical sentiment that the reformers could not have anticipated, especially under the pontificate and with the encouragement of Pope Gregory VII.

THE LAITY AND REFORM

As the reform movement spread in the period after Leo IX's death in 1054, the reformers enlisted an unlikely ally in their struggle to purify the church: the laity. If Leo's travels and synods had raised awareness of the reform papacy and its growing power, the actions of individuals like Peter Damian and Gregory VII actively encouraged members of the laity to become directly involved in the fight against simony and clerical marriage. On the surface, the plan seemed simple enough: laypersons, once made aware of the gravity of the situation, would operate as the papacy's eyes and ears on the ground, a ready-made network of informants. As R. I. Moore points out, the eleventh century saw a rise in the awareness of and dissatisfaction with the church's performance of its spiritual duties, made especially apparent by the simoniacal priests and bishops many of whom were completely unqualified and unlearned in everything from pastoral duties to the liturgy itself. In this climate, it is ironic that the church decided to bring attention to the shortcomings of its own members and thus "advertised in proclaiming its own ideals the extent to which it fell short of them."¹⁵ These would also not be isolated incidents and cases, but concerned parishes and bishoprics across Europe, thus involving a wide swath of the laity and embedding reform in the popular consciousness.

As the Investiture Struggle heated up between emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII, both sides engaged in a war of letter writing and pamphleteering that further involved the laity. In his fight to rid the church of simoniacal priests and bishops, especially those who were appointed by the emperor or at least sided with him, Gregory reiterated the earlier prohibition from the council of Reims in 1049 that encouraged the laity to avoid the masses and services of these individuals. There was precedent for this as well in the first prohibition of lay investiture from 1059 under Pope Nicholas II where the laity were directly prohibited from hearing the mass of a priest if they knew he had a wife or concubine.¹⁶ Gregory's numerous letters and pamphlets not only cultivated an awareness of reform ideas but openly called upon the laity to act on behalf of the reformers themselves through disobedience. In one instance, Gregory exhorted the faithful that if their bishop did not submit to papal reforms, "by apostolic

authority we charge all of you, both greater and lesser, who stand by God and St. Peter, that if he [the bishop] is determined to continue in his obduracy you should show him neither respect nor obedience."¹⁷ As we have seen before, this is the same approach that Gregory took, following Peter Damian's warning to Henry IV, when he released the emperor's subjects from their oaths of fealty.¹⁸ In both cases, it involved direct public participation in one of the great debates of the time and also fostered a public awareness of the stakes. According to Moore, "this magnified and exaggerated the conviction . . . that traditional authority had been overthrown by papal command, and that the faithful of Christ had the duty of exposing and undoing the wrongs of those who claimed the authority of his mantle."¹⁹ This was indeed a revolutionary approach that placed an unprecedented amount of power in the hands of the laity. For so long as it was directed and guided by the papacy, the plan seemed to work. But as Gregory and his successors would become painfully aware, once the reforming genie was unleashed, it could not so easily be put back into the bottle.

The unexpected consequences of involving the laity can easily be seen in the case of the Pataria of Milan, which started out as a very local challenge to clerical marriage but grew into a major movement that was supported by two reforming popes. The main period of activity of this group known as the Patarenes (*Patarini*), a derisive name coined by their enemies possibly meaning "rag pickers," was from 1057–75 and a by-product of the reforms begun under Leo IX.²⁰ The initial movement was started by a deacon named Arialdo who, greatly impressed by the reforming zeal emanating from Rome, launched an impassioned attack on clerical marriage in the city of Milan, although his challenge would quickly come to embrace simony as one of the prime evils of his day. Arialdo himself lived the life he preached about, embracing poverty and chastity and, when his reform ideas began to attract followers, he encouraged them all to live communally by the same ideals.²¹ In his public preaching he denounced the Milanese clergy as wicked and sinful and even called their sacraments dog dung and their churches cow stalls.²² He encouraged his slowly growing group of followers to boycott the services and sacraments of priests suspected of being unchaste, but this action quickly turned into violence. The houses of priests who refused to renounce their way of life were plundered and in some cases they were dragged away by violent mobs if they tried to perform the Mass.

Arialdo's attack on simony and nicolaitism, directed against prominent clergy and even the archbishop, drew support not simply because some inhabitants were taken with reform, but also because of issues involving class divisions in Milan. According to hostile chroniclers, the Patarene supporters of Arialdo appeared to be middle and lower class individuals attacking the higher clergy for their ostentatious lifestyles that clearly deviated from the *vita apostolica*. In fact, the Pataria could count among its members individuals from every social class in Milan,

from the highest nobility down to the poverty stricken.²³ The disturbances were also due to stark social divisions between the capitanei, the powerful aristocratic families allied with the cathedral chapter and the bishop, and their immediate subordinates, the vavassores, whose land was generally granted to them by the capitanei. About 20 years prior to the outbreak of the Pataria, the vavassores in 1037 had sided with emperor Conrad II against archbishop Aribert and his capitanei allies. Their reward for supporting the emperor was an imperial guarantee of their inheritance rights over their lands in the *Constitutio de Feudis*, which not only granted them more economic autonomy but also served to limit the power of the bishop and higher nobility.²⁴ The vavassores, along with the growing class of merchants and the populace in general, provided a formidable force against the wealth and power of the archbishop and his supporters, so that when reform arrived in Milan it found numerous supporters.²⁵ The higher clergy thus became an easy target for reformers because their lifestyle deviated so visibly from apostolic life.

The issue of reform exploded violently in Milan due to the convergence of a number of factors, including the social divisions just discussed but also because of the growing rift between empire and papacy over the issue of investiture. As Milan was perhaps the most powerful city in Lombardy in the mid-eleventh century, emperors and popes sought to exert control over this lucrative prize. Henry IV therefore supported the archbishop, while the papacy, first under Alexander II and then Gregory VII, lent their support to the Pataria. The situation, which ultimately resulted in the emperor's excommunication and deposition, started in 1071 when the archbishop, Guido, who had been in power since the death of Aribert in 1045 and had been the object of Patarene attacks, resigned.²⁶ Using his imperial authority Henry invested another cleric from Milan, Godfrey, as archbishop. The Pataria, led by Erlembald, who had taken control of the movement after the assassination of Ariald in 1066, promoted violence and attacks against the archbishop and his supporters and disrupted the church services of their adversaries. At Easter 1074 Erlembald supposedly smashed the chrism consecrated by one of the Lombard bishops and denied Easter baptisms until he could get a "pure" bishop to consecrate some more.²⁷ Pope Alexander II himself had stepped in and excommunicated the imperial appointee, much to the pleasure of the Pataria, and even gave Erlembald a banner of St. Peter, which the latter proudly displayed in his processions throughout the city. However, despite this papal support, the street fighting took its toll and the chaotic situation in Milan prompted his capitanei opponents to take steps and have Erlembald murdered in 1075. The violent backlash against the Pataria dispersed its adherents and effectively destroyed the movement, but it did open the door for reform principles to enter the city, albeit slowly. By encouraging active lay involvement in reform, whether through preaching or pamphleteering, the papacy inadvertently

fostered a mindset that was then primed to seek out clerical abuses, whether they be simony, concubinage, or, more broadly, deviance from the apostolic ideals of purity and simplicity.

PAPAL GOVERNMENT

Not all of the measures undertaken by the reform papacy were as contentious as investiture or as violent as supporting the Pataria. The papal reformers also made major advances toward establishing a powerful papacy independent of secular, and especially imperial, control by developing a massive bureaucracy. One of the first moves toward such independence came with the decree in 1059 regarding papal elections under Nicholas II. Breaking with centuries of tradition whereby emperors had the right to appoint new popes, in order to assert its independence from secular control, the papacy made elections an internal affair, to be conducted exclusively by the cardinals. In so doing, it bypassed not only the emperor's right to choose a successor but also the rights of the Roman nobility who had so often placed their own candidates on the papal throne without regard to qualification.

The College of Cardinals and their electoral powers were but one of the many changes to papal government, which saw the development of the curia, the extension of papal control via legates, a renewed interest in canon law, frequent decretals, mandatory episcopal visitations to ensure conformity, the establishment of the Inquisition, and an explosion of church finances to fund all of these institutions. The development and expansion of the curia as the main body of papal government began in earnest under Pope Urban II (1088–99), and it came to mirror the courts of the other European rulers like the kings of England and France. The curia consisted of three main departments: the camera, the chancery, and the chapel. While the chapel was mostly concerned with the performance of liturgical functions, the main duty of the camera was initially concerned with direct papal finances, that is, monies that went straight to the pope himself, but it rapidly expanded to oversee the many holdings of the church, especially in Rome. Technically, the duties of the chancellor oversaw the growing cadre of notaries and secretaries, but in reality the chancellor was the gatekeeper for all cases before they reached the pontiff who acted as the pope's chief adviser. He also regulated all documents created by the curia. The position was so prominent that not only did the chancellor always accompany the pope when he when he travelled but many chancellors were eventually elevated to the position of pontiff.²⁸

Bureaucratic reforms occurred at all levels of the papal government. In order to bolster the reformers' claims of papal supremacy, a concerted effort was made to codify and streamline the various canons, papal decrees, edicts, and church laws into a coherent source. The papacy needed to be able to support their claims

of supremacy with documentation. Codifying all this material would also enable the curia to conduct its work more effectively, thus allowing for an even further extension of papal authority. To this end, around 1140, in Bologna the canon lawyer and monk, Gratian, compiled all the available canonical writings into one work called the *Decretum*. Originally titled *The Concordance of Discordant Canons*, the *Decretum* sought to harmonize all the various sources into an organized compendium that resolved discrepancies in favor of a streamlined code of ecclesiastical law. Like the centralizing legal tendencies of the secular monarchs of the day, the *Decretum* provided for uniformity in canon law and helped cement the role of the church as the single adjudicator of ecclesiastical justice. Canon law was applicable to more than just ecclesiastical issues as it also regulated elements of the lives of the laity.

As the papal bureaucracy grew, it needed an effective and centralized means to exert as much direct control as possible throughout Christendom. To that end, it employed papal legates that were sent out directly by the pope and often spoke for him. These legates traveled to kingdoms far and wide, including France, Germany, England, Spain, Burgundy, Sicily, Scandinavia, and Hungary. Standing in for the pope himself, these legates directly participated in such events as the Concordat of Worms in 1122, the Treaty of Constance with Frederick I in 1153, the imperial diet of Besançon in 1157, and even the reconciliation of King Henry II of England after his men murdered Thomas Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, in 1170.²⁹ The legates thus negotiated with kings and emperors (in the case of delegations to Constantinople) on behalf of the pope himself. In fact, even the title of the legate denoted his central importance to whatever papal mission he was on. The chief legates were referred to as *legatus a latere* ("legate [from the pope's] side") and spoke directly for the pope as a papal plenipotentiary.³⁰

Gregory VII used legates extensively to proclaim reforming decrees and to see to their implementation wherever they were sent. In other cases, his legates were a convenient means to negotiate with Henry IV's enemies during the struggle over investiture. The legates, by their very presence, also served the purpose of promoting papal primacy in all matters, both sacred and secular, thus assisting in the centralization of papal power. Of course, the presumption behind the presence of papal legates was not without criticism or opposition, especially in places like Germany where episcopal independence had been the norm for centuries. For example, in 1075 the archbishops of Bremen and Mainz complained that the papal legates were aggressive bullies and "reckless madmen" who basically commanded the archbishops to follow their papally approved orders, or pack up and head to Rome to explain themselves to the pope in person.³¹ The legates thus promoted reform ideals and also negated, albeit haltingly and over time, any sense of episcopal independence, thereby strengthening the power and reach of the papacy.

Another method for consolidating papal control over both ecclesiastics and the laity was through papal councils, and the eleventh and twelfth centuries saw an unprecedented number of them, both general and ecumenical. Synods had existed before the reform papacy, but in many cases the papal synods before Leo IX had been mostly local affairs, counting among their members bishops from areas near the papally controlled region around Rome. In short, these earlier synods were very much local and regional affairs. But under Leo and his immediate successors, these synods became an innovative tool for extending papal control of the church. As I. S. Robinson explains, these synods now became "an assembly attended by bishops from outside the Roman ecclesiastical province and from outside the imperial territories, an assembly under the sole presidency of the pope, the decrees of which were regarded as binding on the whole of Latin Christendom."³² These synods were vital to reforming both the morals and practices of the clergy and also for disseminating reform measures to all the bishops, whether they attended or not. These synods were also significant because of their location: the Lateran palace in Rome, which clearly indicated that Rome and its pontiff were the absolute peak of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. These early synods also served as an ecclesiastical court of justice, especially under Gregory VII and his struggles with Henry IV. It was at such meetings that Gregory excommunicated several advisors of Henry IV, Philip I of France, Norman kings, and several imperial bishops as well.³³ Of course the most notable excommunication and deposition was that of Henry IV himself.

As reform measures slowly began to take hold, the nature of these councils changed. Whereas synods of the eleventh century were mostly judicial in nature, those of the twelfth century were much more legislative and covered a whole range of beliefs and practices among both ecclesiastics and the laity. The First Lateran Council, convened in 1123 by Pope Calixtus II shortly after the Concordat of Worms, passed a whole series of canons that covered a vast range of issues, starting with the now standard prohibition of simony and clerical marriage. It also legislated a variety of church practices such as mandating that only bishops could appoint priests to their churches and a prohibition of laymen disposing of church property. But other canons were more socially oriented and involved regulating the lives of the laity. Thus the council prohibited marriage between close blood relations as well as attacks on churches. It also dealt with attacks on pilgrims and merchants, and even counterfeiters, by threatening with excommunication any individual guilty of such acts. The council also encouraged crusade to the East by granting remission of sins for those who undertook it and specifically offered church protection over the property of anyone who went.³⁴ By protecting crusader property, stopping assaults on pilgrims, and excommunicating counterfeiters, none of which are explicitly theological, the papacy was engaging and regulating society at all levels, revealing the extent of

the church's reach into society only a little over a half century after the beginning of reforms.

Later Lateran councils expanded this centralized control of ecclesiastical government, individual belief and practice, and even daily life. The Second Lateran Council in 1139, in addition to invalidating clerical marriages, also regulated clerical attire, mandating modesty in dress to avoid scandal. It excommunicated any among the laity who refused to pay their tithes to the bishop and denied proper burial to anyone who allowed jousts or other tournaments (at least those that could end in death). Politically, the Second Lateran also mandated that secular rulers needed to coordinate the dispensing of justice with the local bishop.³⁵ The Third Lateran Council of 1179 clarified the rules for papal elections, decreeing that only cardinals could elect a pope and even then it had to be with a two-thirds majority. It also repeated earlier condemnations of simony but also stipulated a minimum age of 30 for the episcopate and forbade the charging of money for church services such as burials, marriage blessings, and even sacraments. This council also regulated sexuality with its antisodomy prohibitions, where guilty priests were deposed and forced to do penance while laymen were excommunicated. Excommunication was also employed for usury. In keeping with the previous council's exertion of control over secular leaders, this third council also claimed that rulers had an obligation and a duty to suppress heresy in their territories.³⁶ Finally, the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 signified the height of papal power both in its assertion of the orthodoxy of transubstantiation as well as the clear proclamation of papal primacy with respect to all other patriarchs within the church. The council also decreed that annual councils were to be held for the reform of clerical morals while forbidding the creation of new religious orders. In terms of daily life, annual confessions were mandated for the laity while at the same time, the dress of Jews and Muslims was regulated so that they could more easily be identified and distinguished from Christians.³⁷ This last decree is extraordinary in terms of papal power, because it attempts to control the actions, even down to the clothing, of those who were not members of the church, and it reveals both the outlook of the papacy and its scope of dominion at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

The transformation of the papacy from a relatively powerless seat fought over by squabbling Roman aristocrats in the eleventh century to a massive bureaucracy that directly touched the lives of most Christians by the thirteenth century was an extraordinary development that had its origins in the struggle between Gregory VII and Henry IV. As the reform papacy began to pull away from imperial control, it began to establish itself as a powerful entity in its own right and, as we have seen, to rapidly grow into a feudal overlordship that rivaled that of the kings of England, France, and Germany. Perhaps the clearest sign of this transformation appeared on the eve of Gregory's struggle with Henry and the issuance

of the *Dictatus Papae* in March of 1075. The most obvious example of this newfound power was Gregory's revolutionary assertion that the pope alone could depose emperors. But other elements of the document are just as compelling and reveal the extent (or at least the hope) of papal power: no synod or council could be called without the pope's approval, no work could be regarded as canonical without papal approval, the pope could be judged by no one, and all important church cases had to be submitted to the pope. In addition, it stated that the church had never erred, anyone not in conformity with the papacy was not considered a Catholic, and that the pope had the power to absolve subjects from their oaths of fealty if their lord was judged unjust.³⁸

The papacy also exhibited the traits of a monarchy through its interaction with other rulers as well. In the case of the Investiture Controversy, beginning with Gregory VII, popes threw their support behind imperial opponents such as the German antikings. The papacy used its growing power and influence (and often money), as noted above, to aid groups like the Pataria in their opposition to the emperor and his episcopal allies. Of course, the deposition of emperors like Henry IV and the release of his subjects from their oaths of loyalty is a prime example of this newfound papal power. Gregory, via his legates, also flexed papal muscle in other sovereign states, such as in France where several archbishops were suspended while the archbishop of Rheims was fully deposed.³⁹ An early example of the feudal nature of the reform papacy was in its alliance with the Normans of southern Italy and the extraction of oaths of fealty from leaders like Robert Guiscard in 1059. Likewise, the launching of the crusades under Pope Urban II at Clermont in 1095 reveals the power of the papacy to mobilize kings, knights, barons, and commoners together for the goal of expanding Christendom and reclaiming supposed Christian lands in the East under the overall leadership of the pope. And perhaps the most obvious example of the papacy as monarchy occurred under Pope Innocent III at the height of papal power when he, at various times, excommunicated all the major rulers of Western Europe, from England to France to Germany, and even took ownership of all of England only to give it to King John I as a fief. In all these cases, the papacy exhibited the same power, influence, and authority as its secular counterparts, and often more so.

CONCLUSION

The irony is that while the reforming papacy originally promoted a return to a purer and simpler church based on the apostolic model, its methods in trying to achieve it instead transformed it into a mighty institution whose wealth, holdings, and power rivaled that of the great kingdoms of its day. Moreover, the message of reform that had been spread far and wide, which encouraged the laity to become

actively involved in the process had, by its very nature, raised their awareness of the potential for ecclesiastical abuses. But reform was not limited to incidents of simony, clerical marriage, or lay investiture. The laity had been primed to look for any deviation from the apostolic purity and poverty promoted by the earliest reformers, such as the wealth and power of the archbishop of Milan. But as the reformist papacy grew into a papal monarchy, it too acquired many of the traits it had fought so hard against, acquiring vast lands, leading countless armies, collecting vast sums of money, and becoming inextricably involved in affairs that appeared far more worldly than spiritual. The popular response to this massive increase in ecclesiastical power and growth was twofold: on the one hand, individuals decided to seek out their own apostolic lifestyle in an attempt to satisfy their own spiritual needs, while on the other hand some saw it as their religious duty to call out an apparently wayward church. Of course, in some cases, like the Order of Apostles, both approaches ultimately merged into one.

Gerard Segarelli's *Vita Apostolica*

The concept of poverty that would come to be espoused by Segarelli and the Apostles was not unique, but instead had long existed in both orthodox and heretical guises in the general Christian consciousness. From the eleventh century onward Christians seeking greater holiness attempted to lead their lives according to the biblical model offered by the original apostles of Jesus, based in large part on the *Acts of the Apostles*.¹ In following this *vita apostolica*, adherents renounced material goods and a worldly life, giving up their regular clothing in exchange for robes and sandals. They often formed loose-knit communities, living collectively on the generous donations and assistance of other members of the laity, who rewarded them for their examples of piety and austerity. As discussed below, these groups tended to avoid the formality of a rule, such as the Benedictine Rule, in favor of their own interpretation of early Christian precedents.

CHURCH REFORM AND THE *VITA APOSTOLICA*

This lay emphasis on a return to early Christian purity can be traced in part to the widespread reform movement that began under Pope Leo IX and was very publicly promoted by Pope Gregory VII, who became the movement's leader and figure-head.² Some scholars, such as Herbert Grundmann, have argued that the monastic and clerical reforms undertaken during the latter's pontificate set a standard of renewal that trickled down to awaken a sense of reform among the laity.³ As we have seen, Gregory and his supporters sought to draw out and purge the church of corruption, including simony and clerical marriage, claiming that such practices smacked of devotion to the material present and betrayed their clerical vows. In order to succeed in their reforms, the Gregorians employed both preaching and pamphlets to gain the support of the laity in identifying violators, presenting them with theological controversies previously confined to the clergy. The classic examples of such lay involvement were the previously discussed Patarenes of Milan and their public and often violent campaigns against "unworthy" priests.⁴ There were, however, some unforeseen consequences of this effort to involve the laity in theological issues. As Grundmann has noted, the reforms stimulated the development of a new popular consciousness that emphasized living one's life

strictly according to the apostolic model of evangelical poverty and work.⁵ Some segments of the laity went so far as to question the efficacy of the priesthood in general and to presume to judge their “validity” according to the model of the *vita apostolica*.⁶ In both these cases, Christians could now exercise individual agency not only in their own pursuit of salvation but by imposing their new conceptualization of spiritual purity on the priesthood.

Appealing to the development of this new lay consciousness, at the beginning of the twelfth century, various itinerant, independent preachers spread a relatively benign message concerning the *vita apostolica*. In northern France, Robert of Arbrissel gave up a career in the church to wander barefoot and in rags through the countryside preaching poverty. He soon attracted followers, the “poor of Christ,” who likewise gave up their material possessions. One such follower, Bernard of Tiron, had been a monk, a prior, and an abbot, but left his monastery after his other monks refused to adhere to the new Gregorian reforms. After connecting with Robert, Bernard also began wandering and preaching the life of poverty and penance, barefoot and dressed in rags. Perhaps the most famous of these innovative French itinerant preachers was Norbert of Xanten, a cleric like Robert and Bernard, who abandoned his ecclesiastical career. Norbert’s ideas of reform were ultimately channeled into the creation of the Premonstratensian order. All three of these men emphasized poverty and humility in their preaching, drew large crowds of followers, all the while supporting and promoting established doctrine.⁷ Although some church authorities feared the popularity of these early preachers, especially the potential hazards of mingling men and women, while others were concerned about their message of penance and its impact on their own ecclesiastical wealth, the preachers and their followers nevertheless entered the system through the foundation of new monasteries or orders.⁸

THE RISE OF POVERTY HERESIES: WALDENSIANS AND CATHARS⁹

As the twelfth century wore on, some grew dissatisfied with the slow pace of reform and their preaching often led to the formation of new groups that were overtly opposed to the traditional church. In Cologne, in 1143, a group later condemned as heretics was discovered within the church, wanting to return to true apostolic purity and seeking to convince the rest of the clergy that only a life lived in accordance with the gospel could truly be called Christian.¹⁰ Many of these Cologne heretics applied their understanding of Scripture to accept only those church practices and sacraments that they believed had a biblical precedent. Their poverty and biblical literalism, they argued, indicated that only they themselves were the true followers and believers in Christ, while the wealth and luxury of the

rest of the clergy rendered them unworthy to preach, teach, and administer sacraments.¹¹ The *vita apostolica*, therefore, now justified and virtually demanded vocal dissent. The fact that many of these heretics quickly turned to popular preaching to spread their ideas to the laity reveals that the threat to clerical hegemony had a subversive potential.

The *vita apostolica*, itinerant preaching, and popular support coalesced into two of the church's most threatening heresies in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Waldensianism and Catharism. The Waldensian movement originated around 1170 when Peter Valdes, or Waldo, a rich merchant from Lyon, experienced a spiritual crisis and became convinced that his lifestyle was at odds with the life of a true Christian as expressed in the Gospels. In order to be sure, Valdes paid some priests to translate portions of the New Testament into the French vernacular, whereupon his fears, he felt, were confirmed.¹² In response, Valdes planned to sell all his possessions and become a wandering preacher advocating the *vita apostolica*. Out of respect for his wife, he gave her title to all his immovable property, then sold his remaining possessions and gave most of the proceeds to the poor. He then promptly left his past behind, gathering followers who admired his austerity and vernacular sermons. Valdes and his supporters, known as the Poor of Lyons, decided to seek the approval of Pope Alexander III for their itinerancy. Although Alexander applauded their concept of poverty, he ultimately prohibited their preaching, unless local priests invited them to do so. These local priests, fearing the challenge to their exclusive license, almost universally denied the Waldensians their approval to preach.¹³ In 1179, the Waldensians made another attempt to gain papal approval of their apostolic lifestyle at the third Lateran council in Rome, but the commission appointed to hear their case derisively dismissed them as insufficiently trained and prepared.¹⁴ Undaunted, Valdes and his followers continued their vernacular preaching, which spread the movement through southern France, northern Spain, the Italian peninsula, and deep into eastern Europe.¹⁵ Like the heretics at Cologne, some of Valdes' followers claimed that their apostolic poverty legitimized their disobedience because their lifestyle adhered more to the biblical ideal than Rome's did. In 1184, Pope Lucius III condemned the Waldensians in the bull *Ad Abolendam*, excommunicating them *en masse*, but their movement continued, in various forms, through the Protestant Reformation to the present day.¹⁶

The southern French Cathars of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries presented the most serious, organized threat to the authority of the church not only because of their adherence to a variant of the *vita apostolica* but also because they had formed their own separate hierarchy and cosmology. The Cathar insistence on a return to apostolic purity stemmed primarily from their dualistic understanding of a universe divided between opposing forces of good and evil, spirit and flesh. According to this dualism, the evil principle was seen as the God of the Old

Testament and creator of the material world, while the good principle, understood as Christ, was the spiritual savior of the New Testament.¹⁷ Cathars believed that the cosmic conflict between good and evil was waged inside every individual, as the spirit struggled to throw off its fleshly integument. Accordingly, the material world and its attachments were shunned following the example set by the apostles in the New Testament. The Cathars grouped themselves into two categories, the *perfecti* (the “perfects”) and the *credentes* (the “believers/followers”). The rigorist *perfecti* were those few who took their ascetic renunciation of the material world to such an extreme that they abstained from sexual intercourse, refused to eat meat or cheese as it ultimately derived from such intercourse, and even, in some alleged cases, starved themselves to death in a ritual known as the *endura*. The *credentes*, those who ascribed to many of the teachings of the *perfecti* regarding dualism, but still led their ordinary lives, made up the majority of Cathar adherents. Despite the rigorous dualism of the Cathars, they became quite popular among the laity, attributable in part to the receptive twelfth-century atmosphere that admired and supported ascetic wandering preachers of poverty.¹⁸ It was precisely this wandering asceticism and preaching that not only allowed the Cathars to attract followers but also fostered a justifiable apprehension among the clergy.

Church authorities responded to the Cathar threat in a variety of ways. Hoping to bring *credentes* and other Cathar sympathizers back into the fold of the Roman Church, successive popes sent out their own wandering preachers, who at first were disastrously unprepared for the highly educated Cathar *perfecti*, who were well versed in rhetoric, Scripture, and persuasion. Church authorities convened the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, under Pope Innocent III, to officially affirm certain key doctrines, partly in response to Cathar preaching. Among the decrees of Lateran IV aimed at combating Cathar beliefs was the assertion that there existed only one God, that Jesus was bodily resurrected, that the miracle of the Mass was the literal transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and that annual confession had to be made to a priest.¹⁹ These decrees specifically refuted dualistic theology by proclaiming a single God and emphasizing the corporeal, fleshly existence of Jesus, as opposed to the exclusively spiritual manifestation posited by Cathar belief. Additionally, it was partly due to its need for better educated preachers as well as the need to have orthodox examples of the “poor of Christ” that the church also sanctioned the establishment of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders, in 1209 and 1217 respectively. Finally, the most forceful measure taken by church authorities against the Cathars was the proclamation of the Albigensian Crusade, waged from 1209 to 1229, which, in conjunction with the later inquisition beginning in 1231, resulted in almost the complete annihilation of the heretics over the course of the next 100 years. Though some of the *perfecti* escaped the crusading sword for a time and the heresy lingered on for another century, Catharism would never again pose such a threat in the West.

SEGARELLI'S APOSTOLIC LIFESTYLE

Unlike the anticlericalism of the Cologne heretics or the Cathars' dualism, Gerard Segarelli and the *Ordo Apostolorum* remained much more orthodox in their apostolic poverty and penitential preaching precisely because they were not initially interested in dissent. Modern American and British historians have often erroneously and carelessly implied that the *Ordo Apostolorum* was an intentionally heretical movement from its inception and even suggested that Segarelli himself knowingly fostered heresy.²⁰ In fact, despite the negative portrayal of Segarelli and his followers in contemporary chronicles, especially that of the Franciscan Salimbene, the Order existed for almost half a century before running into trouble with church authorities. The Order as a whole was not generally considered heretical even after Segarelli was condemned and executed as a heretic in 1300, but only when his successor, Fra Dolcino, adopted a militant stance toward ecclesiastical authority.

The most significant and widely used contemporary source for understanding the origin and spread of the Apostles is the *Cronica* written by the Franciscan, Salimbene of Parma, in the 1280s, which provides a detailed, firsthand account of the origin and spread of the Apostles. Born in 1221, Salimbene de Adam joined the Franciscans in 1238 and began a long career in the Order that lasted until his death in 1289. Though he technically renounced the wealthy life that he was born into, Salimbene never really abandoned the privileges of, and connection to, the upper echelons of society. As Joseph L. Baird has noted, Salimbene "exhibits a kind of vain pride in his worldly associations not altogether becoming to a follower of St. Francis. He rarely reports of any rich and powerful person, for example, without remarking on his own close friendship with him."²¹ Indeed, the list of Salimbene's friends and acquaintances includes Pope Innocent IV and King Louis IX of France.²² Due to these associations, there is an unmistakable bias in his chronicle against the lower orders or indeed against anyone outside his elite circle. This snobbery is most evident in Salimbene's depiction of Gerard Segarelli as an uneducated rustic. One must therefore proceed cautiously with this history, as it is a hostile account that ridicules the upstart Segarelli and the Apostles for attempting to copy the Franciscan concept of poverty.²³

In 1260, Gerard Segarelli of Parma petitioned the local Franciscan brotherhood for permission to join their Order and lead a life of regulated poverty.²⁴ According to Salimbene, Segarelli was ignorant, foolish, illiterate, and lowborn, which accounted for the denial of his application.²⁵ After this setback, Segarelli sought to embrace a life of evangelical poverty outside the Franciscan Order. His inspiration came from a painting inside the Franciscan's church in Parma that depicted the Apostles of Christ with sandals on their feet and mantles wrapped around their shoulders.²⁶ Desiring to imitate the original Apostles, Segarelli let

his hair and beard grow long, donned a coarse, gray robe and a white mantle, which he wore over his shoulders, and put on both the sandals and cord of the Franciscans.²⁷

Following the example of the wandering preachers who had come before him, Segarelli then sold his small house, took the money to the town square in Parma and, standing upon the *podesta's* (mayor's) rostrum, scattered it around saying, "Whoever wants it may have it!"²⁸ According to Salimbene, these actions stemmed from his understanding of and desire to fulfill Jesus' counsel in Mt. 19.21: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me," the same phrase Francis of Assisi had invoked to a similar end.²⁹ Afterwards, Segarelli apparently wandered alone about the streets of Parma for days "neither speaking to nor greeting anyone," in apparent obedience to Jesus' admonition in Lk. 10.4 to "salute no man by the way."³⁰ When he did finally resume speaking, Segarelli again followed the lead of earlier itinerant preachers and began calling on people to do penance, with the command, *penitencágite*, a vernacular variant on the Latin phrase *penitentiam agite* ("Do ye penance!").³¹ This saying became the signature phrase of both Segarelli and the *Ordo Apostolorum*.

POPULARITY AND SPREAD OF THE APOSTLES

Segarelli's simple message of renunciation of possessions and penance soon began to attract followers. Upon hearing Segarelli's call to penance, some became desperately concerned about their own wealth and luxury and feared, like Peter Valdes, that their material possessions would in some way hinder their salvation. For others, their own current state of poverty was legitimized on the basis of their class and meant that they needed only to perform the penance preached by Segarelli in order to achieve salvation. Still others were disillusioned by the growing worldliness of the Franciscans themselves, thinking that they had strayed from the original message of their founder. From this last group came one of the first followers of Segarelli, referred to as Brother Robert, who had been a servant of the Franciscans in Parma. Salimbene is quick to claim that Segarelli "persuaded" this Robert, a "disobedient and insolent young man," to leave the service of the Franciscans and become his companion.³² Salimbene could not or would not believe that someone would willingly leave even a servile position among the Blessed Brothers to join Segarelli, "the fool."³³ Claiming personal knowledge of the incident, Salimbene further reveals his hostility when he claims that Robert left the Brothers as a thief, stealing a cup, a knife, and a table cloth, which makes no sense when one considers the renunciation of worldly goods espoused by Segarelli.³⁴ Salimbene even goes so far as to say that Robert, by leaving the

service of the Franciscans, is like Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Christ to the Jews for money.³⁵ For Salimbene, Robert is a fitting first follower of Segarelli, revealing the corruption of the Apostles from the start.

Unlike Salimbene, however, some citizens of Parma marveled at the two Apostles as examples of penitential purity and began to support them. According to Salimbene, Segarelli was frequently invited to lunch, dinner, or some other meal in homes or inns.³⁶ As a testament to the growing popularity of Segarelli and Robert, wandering through the city preaching penance, the number of Apostles quickly swelled to 30.³⁷ With membership growing, Segarelli established a communal ceremony that symbolized their poverty and, for new members, signified the beginning of their apostolic life. In this ceremony, he and his followers would gather together in a room and remove all of their clothing, "so that, naked, they might follow a naked Christ." Then, employing an innovation that scandalized their critics, a woman entered the room and, following the orders of Gerard, gathered up all the clothes and redistributed them among all the members of the group.³⁸ The stripping off and redistribution of clothes to the other members was seen not only as renunciation of material possessions but also as a willingness on the part of the individual to give all that he or she had to their neighbor.³⁹ This ceremony is also significant because it appears that their communal equality extended to both sexes, as women were allowed to participate in the ceremony with the men.⁴⁰ Such equality, or inversion (if we take the woman distributing the clothes as superior, or at least equal, to the men), was relatively uncommon because the medieval church almost universally segregated the sexes with regard to religious expression and devotion.⁴¹ However, it is also possible that Salimbene falsely added the woman into an embellished account of the ceremony, making it look very suspicious to outsiders and thus misrepresenting the ceremony to further scandalize the Order.

Women had a more active role in the Order than simply helping exchange garments for the men. Female Apostles apparently performed many of the same tasks as their male counterparts as they wandered and begged alongside them, for there is no indication of gender segregation in the sources. Salimbene himself emphasized the fact that Apostles of both sexes traveled together, and also that noble women numbered themselves among Segarelli's followers.⁴² Almost a quarter century after the order's formation, a group of women calling themselves Apostolic Sisters made a pilgrimage from Modena and Reggio to Parma to confer with Segarelli.⁴³ Moreover, inquisitorial records from Bologna from 1299 indicate that almost 40 percent of the Apostles were women from a variety of towns.⁴⁴ Salimbene also makes reference to certain female Apostles instructing other members (mostly male) in the Order's basic beliefs about voluntary poverty and the apostolic life. In referring to this situation, Salimbene's disgust is almost palpable when he exclaims that "they learn—for shame!—from women that which

they teach to men.”⁴⁵ Both Salimbene’s hostility to Segarelli and his overt misogyny, however, complicate such a reading, because the reference to women teaching men could simply be another of the chronicler’s slanderous remarks made to discredit the Order and not an actual practice.

Partly due to his hostility toward Segarelli and the Apostles and partly out of his own misogynistic tendencies, Salimbene viewed the presence of a woman at the communal ceremony as sinful and corrupting. He asserted that the Apostles had neither decency nor honor at this ceremony and, quoting Origen, considered this woman, indeed all women, to be “the source of sin, the devil’s weapon, the expulsion from Paradise, the mother of crime, the corruption of the ancient law.”⁴⁶ This is by no means the only misogynistic reference in the chronicle, as Salimbene devotes an entire chapter to why “women ought to be avoided.”⁴⁷ In this section Salimbene invokes many of his male patristic predecessors, including Jerome, Augustine, Isidore, John Chrysostom, and Origen, who insist that women are deceivers, seducers, thieves and harlots, beautiful temptresses allied with Satan to bring about the fall of righteous men.⁴⁸ Indeed, Salimbene’s beliefs about women were by no means antiquated, as they were adhered to by many of his contemporary ecclesiastics.⁴⁹

As the number of Segarelli’s followers increased, the Apostles began to gather in a single house in the city, to eat and sleep together.⁵⁰ The *Cronica* is silent regarding the actual ownership of this house and it is thus unclear if the Apostles were allowed the temporary use of someone’s house in the city or if they congregated at the home of one of these new members. If Segarelli’s personal example of renunciation and the communal ceremony of poverty are any indication, it seems logical to suppose that these new members would also give up their possessions upon joining the group. Thus it follows that the house Segarelli and his followers used would have belonged to a nonmember, which, if true, would reinforce the notion that many citizens of Parma were sympathetic to Segarelli’s message. Nonetheless, the possibility cannot be excluded that they shared the home of some new member. In any case, Salimbene himself is quite vocal on the issue of support, lamenting that the inhabitants of Parma, “*my own fellow citizens*, men and women, gave more, and more willingly, to these men than they give to the Franciscans and the Dominicans!”⁵¹ For Salimbene, the rivalry evidenced here is less about theology or spirituality, but rather over material support.

The popularity of Segarelli and the Apostles quickly spread beyond the confines of Parma. Segarelli himself is known to have preached in nearby Collecchio, but his message traveled even further.⁵² Salimbene tells of many faithful coming from far and wide simply to see Segarelli, revered as the first of their congregation. Once assembled, these Brothers would heap praise and applause upon the humble Segarelli, calling out “Father, father, father.”⁵³ With such a fervent group of followers, Segarelli decided to send the Brothers out “to show themselves to

the world" as living example of apostolic piety and purity, directing some to the Papal Court, some to the shrines of Santiago of Compostella, in Spain, and to Mont St. Michel, in France, and some to lands across the sea (presumably the Holy Land).⁵⁴ The impressive reach of the Apostles (Rome, Spain, southern Italy, and lands across the Mediterranean) is further proof that the group was more than just an aberrant phenomenon localized in Parma. Moreover, the destinations chosen were all traditionally accepted pilgrimage sites, which reinforced the group's conventional religious nature.⁵⁵ It is important to note that the first destination, Rome, did not indicate a pilgrimage site but rather the papal court itself. This willingness to appear openly before the Curia indicates that Segarelli and the Apostles saw themselves as operating well within the framework of acceptable religious devotion and expression.⁵⁶

SEGARELLI'S ORTHODOXY

Segarelli's desire to remain orthodox and to respect the proper channels of ecclesiastical authority can be seen in his attempt to secure direct papal oversight. Both he and Brother Robert consulted with Master Albert of Parma, one of seven notaries at the papal court, regarding what they should do concerning a rector. Master Albert referred them to the abbot of the Cistercian monastery in Parma, who apparently relieved himself of this charge quickly. The abbot told them that they should not have any specific residence, but rather the Apostles should travel through the world, as they had from their foundation, hatless, displaying long hair and beards, mantles over their shoulders, begging lodging and hospitality from strangers.⁵⁷ These recommendations effectively served as a rule for the Order of Apostles, providing the group not only with legitimate, ecclesiastical sanction but one that allowed them to compare themselves favorably with other regulated orders, such as the Franciscans and Dominicans.

The Order of Apostles also found support among various bishops throughout northern Italy who allowed them to preach in their cathedrals, much to the dismay of Salimbene. This support was most evident in the case of the "boy preacher" of the Apostles, the nephew of a Franciscan, who had been trained by his uncle to join the Minorites. After the Franciscans denied him admission to their Order, however, this young man joined the Apostles, bringing with him the knowledge of some Franciscan sermons he remembered from copying for his uncle. He then preached these sermons to the congregations of cathedrals.⁵⁸ In Ravenna, for example, at the archbishop's cathedral known as Ursiana, the young Apostle's preaching drew such a large crowd of men and women that latecomers had to stand outside the main door. Salimbene himself was amazed at the size of the crowd, considering that the church was so large that it had four wings.⁵⁹ Such

enthusiasm to see the young Apostle was not limited to the laity but could also be found among Salimbene's own Franciscan brothers. When the boy arrived in Ferrara to preach at the cathedral of St. George, a whole group of Franciscans in a nearby convent rushed out to attend, despite being in the middle of a sermon by Brother Bonaventure of Iseo.⁶⁰ When asked why they were in such a rush, one Franciscan replied, "Because there is a little boy, one of the Apostles, who is preparing to preach in the church of St. George and everybody is hurrying to get a seat."⁶¹ The Apostles could not simply take over a cathedral and its congregation without the consent of the bishop or archbishop and the widespread nature of these cathedral tours indicates that significant and powerful men in the hierarchy supported Segarelli's movement. Salimbene had harsh words for these bishops, claiming that their "wretchedness and indolence" permitted Segarelli and his followers to run amok, preaching "fruitlessly."⁶² Despite Salimbene's disapproval, however, the Apostles continued to preach in various episcopal cathedrals, always drawing large crowds of both sexes and gaining more supporters and converts.⁶³

FEMALE MEMBERSHIP AMONG THE APOSTLES

Contrary to Salimbene's slur that the Apostles catered only to prostitutes and women of ill-repute, mainstream female Apostles were present and prevalent in the Order. Indeed, one of the first women to join Segarelli's following, and the only one mentioned by name, was Lady Tripia Putagio whose brother, Guido Putagio, was also a member.⁶⁴ Despite Salimbene's insistence that only unlearned rustics populated the Order, both Tripia and Guido were siblings of Roland Putagio, podestà of Bologna, proving that even the nobility saw the Apostles as a legitimate source of apostolic piety.⁶⁵

The bishop of Parma, Obizzo Sanvitale, a strong supporter of Segarelli, considered the Apostles valid enough to grant certain penitential privileges to the Apostolic Sisters (*Sorores Apostolorum*), a specific group of women within the order who practiced strict poverty and itinerancy. Not only did the bishop grant a 40-day deferment from penance for those who donated alms to the sisters, he also specifically petitioned other clerics to support their wandering through charity.⁶⁶ Similar support has also been discovered in Bologna in a series of testaments, beginning in 1272, that provided *pro anima* gifts to the Order of Apostles.⁶⁷ The bishop's support for the Apostles, especially the *Sorores Apostolorum*, contradicts Salimbene's assertion that they were merely a band of whores and womanizers and further reinforces the notion, evident from their preaching activities, that the order was both respected and supported by some ecclesiastical authorities. In 1284, almost a quarter century after the order's foundation, the *Cronica* records a group of 12 Apostolic Sisters traveling along the road from Modena and Reggio

to Parma in order to receive Segarelli's blessing and his permission to travel throughout the world.⁶⁸ The appearance of these Apostolic Sisters reveals both the geographic spread of Segarelli's message of poverty and the appeal it had for women as a means for them to participate in their own salvation without the restrictions and enclosure common to other female religious orders. The genuine religiosity of these women, their renunciation of property and embracing of an itinerant lifestyle, was apparently overlooked by Salimbene in his haste to discredit Segarelli and the Order.

Female involvement in and advocacy of the *vita apostolica* was not a new development with the rise of the Order of Apostles, but in fact had been a significant, and for some church leaders, a problematic, issue at least since the preaching of Robert of Arbrissel and Norbert of Xanten in the early twelfth century. Like their male counterparts, women of varying social classes sought to actively participate in the *vita apostolica*, with involvement ranging from orthodox and accepted movements such as the Premonstratensians, the Cistercians, the Poor Clares, and the Humiliati, to heterodox groups like the Waldensians, the Cathars, some Beguines, and of course the Apostles.⁶⁹ Among most of these orthodox movements, women's participation and involvement was almost always suspect, and therefore highly regulated by a male overseer.

Despite the growing number of women demanding direct involvement in religious life, their religious communities were authorized only in connection with preexisting and approved male orders, in part due to the limitations on new religious orders imposed by the Fourth Lateran Council's decree in 1215.⁷⁰ This development limited the accepted growth and proliferation of both women's and men's communities, leaving many pious laypersons to seek a more direct method of participation. Although convents existed for these devoted women, they typically only accepted women who had the financial resources, personal, or familial connections, to enter a nunnery.⁷¹ To complicate matters, strong objections were often made by orders such as the Premonstratensians and the Cistercians against the admission of the increasing number of women who wanted to join, mostly out of fear that the presence of women would cause undue stability among the other (presumably) male religious.⁷²

Partly due to the negative reception of women by male orders and partly because of the limited opportunities for practicing the *vita apostolica* according to orthodox standards, many women turned to groups like the Waldensians, the Beguines, the Cathars, and the Apostles for spiritual fulfillment. Although doctrinally orthodox, the early Waldensians offered unique opportunities to women that were unavailable or discredited among groups as varied in time and place as the Cistercians or Poor Clares. In addition to its promotion of poverty, the Waldensian movement also offered women the chance to preach, an opportunity that was specifically denied to them in other orthodox outlets. Moreover, the

Waldensian renunciation of wealth did not involve buying one's way into a nunnery, an option that appealed to certain women because it meant that they were actively giving up their worldly goods and striving toward salvation under their own power and will.⁷³ Their gifts would thus go to the poor directly, rather than via an intermediary in the form of the house they were joining. Beginning in the twelfth century, the loosely organized Beguine "movement" in the Netherlands, northern France, and Germany appealed to many women who were unable to afford the cost of entrance or find acceptance among the established orders. In general, Beguines were religious, chaste women who often lived together much like in a convent, engaged in manual labor, prayed, and otherwise followed the apostolic lifestyle, except without an official rule or vows.⁷⁴ The Cathars also provided leadership and exalted positions for women within their ranks. Among the Cathars, women, like men, could receive the blessing of the *consolamentum*, a ritual that combined or replaced the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and order, and become "perfects." Additionally, female householders played a significant and ongoing role in the dissemination of Cathar beliefs through the use of their homes for training, sermons and meals for other believers and perfects.⁷⁵ Such recognition offered these women a status otherwise unavailable from the Roman Church and allowed them a significant amount of agency not only in their daily religious lives but also, they believed, in their ultimate salvation.⁷⁶ It was partly the agency of women in the Order of Apostles that generated concern among ecclesiastical observers such as Salimbene.

CONCLUSION

Partly as a response to the changing world around them and partly due to an increased awareness of and desire for a more spiritual life, many Christians, particularly in the thirteenth century, decided to embrace a lifestyle that they believed imitated that of Jesus and his Apostles. Although many of these movements began with a single individual renouncing worldly goods and dedicating themselves instead to the *vita apostolica*, such as Robert of Arbrissel, Peter Valdes, and Gerard Segarelli, they all quickly gained adherents, and began to head visible and very public movements. Their absolute, unwavering poverty appealed to many as a living ideal of true apostolic piety. The fact that many of these movements grew and spread in an urban setting is also an indication of the tensions that the social and economic upheaval created there.

In the case of Segarelli's Apostles, the *vita apostolica* offered its members a sense of spiritual comfort while the general acceptance of the movement by many high-ranking churchmen legitimized and condoned their activities. The Order of Apostles offered its members a path to sanctity that was generally unavailable

via traditional religious means and established orders, which may account for the unusually high level of female participation in the group. Raniero Orioli has argued that the Order enjoyed widespread support precisely because it allowed those typically denied access to the religious sphere (laity, women, and the unlettered) the possibility to personally manage their own religious affairs.⁷⁷ Strong public support also was a factor in the longevity and spread of the Order. Many citizens of Parma and other cities donated food, alms, and shelter to the group, which reveals how the general public looked favorably upon those who embraced the apostolic lifestyle. Since many of the donors could not or would renounce their wealth and possessions to the same extent as Segarelli, they could at least participate vicariously through these offerings. Moreover, ecclesiastical support for the Apostles, especially in the period after the bloody crusades against heretical poverty movements like the Cathars, is another clear indicator of the movements orthodoxy, despite the misgivings and jealous remarks of the chronicler Salimbene.

Rivalry and Slander

Despite the widespread support that Gerard Segarelli and his Order of Apostles received from both lay and ecclesiastical sources, his group ran afoul of another apostolic movement in the city of Parma: the Franciscans.¹ In his chronicle, the Franciscan Fra Salimbene devoted numerous pages to the so-called scandals of the Apostles, their immorality, and their illegitimacy. His account is filled with rumors and innuendos, mostly regarding sexual immorality, that purport to prove that Segarelli and his followers engaged in rampant fornication with women, homosexual acts among men, and even pedophilia. If those accusations were not enough to undermine the Order, he also attacked the legitimacy of the group as a viable path to spirituality by contrasting the education and training of his own Franciscans with the base, illiterate, and rustic nature of Segarelli and his Apostles. Both the Apostles and the Franciscans originated in response to the surge of wealth and prosperity in the thirteenth century, but the Franciscans, at least according to Salimbene, were the ones who truly deserved to have a monopoly on apostolic poverty. Of course, most of Salimbene's accusations were completely false and unfounded attempts at character assassination that did not have much of an immediate effect on the group's popular support. Unfortunately, his negative portrayal of Segarelli and the Apostles has been uncritically accepted by many historians that has only served to obscure a fuller understanding of the group's origins and history.

FOOLS AND FORNICATORS

Throughout his chronicle, Salimbene repeatedly ridiculed the Apostles, especially Gerard Segarelli himself, as illiterate and foolish laymen who have dared to imitate the Franciscan ideal of poverty. With his first reference to the Apostles, Salimbene describes them with derogatory, bestial language. In his initial description he makes use of Rev. 2.9, referring to the Order as "that congregation of obscene and swinish men, foolish and base, 'who say they are' Apostles 'and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.'" ² This line from the Book of Revelation became a signature phrase for Salimbene, who uses it to question their legitimacy and who quotes it in almost every single reference to the Apostles. The Apostles are also labeled as unlearned peasants, who lack an understanding of all things

religious.³ Salimbene even titled one of his sections “Concerning the disgraceful and dishonorable foolishness of these indecent men,” promptly accusing them of being “a congregation of fools and obscene beasts, who want to live by the labor and sweat of others.”⁴ Indeed, Salimbene’s loathing of the Apostles is readily apparent when he suggests that these “obscene deceivers” who do not know their rightful place are “more suited to keeping cows and pigs or cleaning latrines or doing other vile work” than attempting to form a legitimate order.⁵ He insists that the Apostles cannot be an order because they lack bylaws and are thus disorganized and disordered.⁶ Salimbene’s scorn is probably nowhere better demonstrated than when he states, “If these men were in the Order of the Friars Minor, they would hardly be permitted to wait on the tables or wash the dishes or go out seeking bread door to door.”⁷

If Salimbene seems hostile to the Apostles as a group, he reserved a singular distaste and even hatred for Segarelli. Salimbene’s introduction of Segarelli immediately set the tone maintained throughout the chronicle by referring to him as a young man “of base family, an illiterate layman, an idiot and a fool.”⁸ This “foolishness” is such a common theme that Salimbene scarcely refers to Segarelli without using descriptors such as *stultus*, *ydiota*, *illiteratus*, and *rusticus*. For example, he states that after being denied admission to the Franciscan Order, Segarelli sat in their church until he conjured up the plan that he later “foolishly” performed.⁹ The way in which Segarelli came up with his ideas on poverty and the apostolic life, according to the chronicle, thus reinforces his negative portrayal as an illiterate fool. Instead of arriving at his understanding of poverty through Scripture, biblical commentary, or other written sources, Salimbene writes that Segarelli’s insight came visually through a painted image. In yet another example, Salimbene points to Segarelli’s cry of “*Penitençágite*” as the unlearned, improper vernacular form of “*Penitentiam agite*,” which was to be expected from someone who was ignorant of the “proper” words.¹⁰

The Franciscan chronicler also ridicules Segarelli’s preaching near a vineyard outside Collechio by implying that Segarelli foolishly misinterpreted Jesus’ parable of the laborers in the vineyard in Mt. 20.1–16. According to Salimbene’s account, Segarelli simply stood on the road outside a vineyard, saying, “You also go into my vineyard!” Those who “considered him a fool,” knew Segarelli had no vineyard there, but apparently the people from the mountains who did not know him went in and ate the grapes thinking that they had the owner’s permission.¹¹ As Grado G. Merlo has argued, Salimbene firmly believed this to be inadequate and unauthentic preaching, which symbolically destroyed the “true vineyard” of the Lord.¹²

Salimbene uses this vineyard incident to underscore Segarelli’s illiterate and foolish attempt at preaching but it is possible that he spoke more than the single line attributed to him and knowingly used the vineyard as an ideal setting to

emphasize the parable. Segarelli's ability to preach, to synthesize disparate scriptures to support a point, is evident elsewhere in the chronicle when Salimbene says Segarelli used four different scriptural references to justify his refusal to take over the direct leadership of the Apostles.¹³ Moreover, the significance of this section of Matthew for Segarelli and the *vita apostolica* indicates that he did not randomly choose it, as Mt. 20 ends with Jesus explaining that, in the kingdom of heaven, "the last will be first, and the first will be last." This statement emphasizes the inversion of the normal social order by exalting the poor, the meek, and the humble, a theme that resonated with the group's ideal of poverty, and also suggests a social restructuring that would be dangerous to those already in positions of wealth and power. These dual themes of poverty and inversion are even more clearly explained in the scriptural chapter just preceding this parable, where not only does Jesus advocate embracing voluntary poverty by selling all of one's possessions and giving to the poor, but also explicitly asserts that poverty is essential to salvation by stating that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."¹⁴ It seems unlikely that Segarelli would overlook this passage with its similar theme and statement of inversion, where the last (poor) will be first and the first (wealthy) will be last. Moreover, Salimbene's own claim that Segarelli derived his concept of voluntary poverty from an understanding of Mt. 19.21 makes it all the more likely that Segarelli would actually preach on this very theme and not simply recite a single line devoid of its significant context.

Salimbene further tries to discredit Segarelli's message by characterizing the Apostles' language as "scurrilous, disgraceful, useless, dishonorable and idle." Their words, he says, are worthy of ridicule more for their foolishness than from their malice.¹⁵ By stigmatizing Segarelli as an illiterate fool, Salimbene hoped to undermine the group's religious message, reducing the threat they obviously posed to his own Order, which he believed to be officially sanctioned as a righteous example of the *vita apostolica*. Yet, as Corrado Mornese and Raniero Orioli have argued, Segarelli was a "man of the people" and a formidable oral communicator whose message and popularity threatened the prestige of the Franciscans.¹⁶ Moreover, according to Herbert Grundmann, the designations *illiteratus* and *rusticus* do not reveal anything of substance regarding the actual social status of Segarelli or his followers or of their actual literacy. These two terms, along with *idiota*, simply refer to the fact that these individuals had not received formal clerical training or education.¹⁷ Ironically, Segarelli and the Apostles would not have been ashamed of such labels, as they were similar to those used to describe the original apostles as well as Francis of Assisi.¹⁸

Salimbene's *Cronica* makes every effort to portray all of Gerard Segarelli's actions as foolish or incompetent, sometimes even going so far as to fabricate stories to illustrate a point. When recounting Segarelli's sale of his house and the

subsequent distribution of the proceeds, Salimbene claims that Segarelli did not properly give to the poor, but instead gave the money to gamblers and blasphemers in the town square.¹⁹ In his haste to malign Segarelli, Salimbene deliberately ignored his own Franciscan ideals, overlooking the fact that, for individuals like Segarelli, Valdes, and Francis, and their audience, the significance of the act lay in the formal and public renunciation of material wealth itself. This ridicule becomes almost unbelievable, particularly when he relates tales of Segarelli being circumcised, dressing himself in swaddling clothes and sucking milk from the breasts of a young woman, all in order to more literally imitate the life of Christ.²⁰ Though the stories may be exaggerated or even blatant lies, they do represent the malice Salimbene held for Segarelli and the Apostles and the semi-heretical movement they represented. As Joseph Baird notes, "One could scarcely imagine, for example, a more perfect distillation of the hatred and distrust for unauthorized and semi-heretical religious movements of the thirteenth century than Salimbene's picture of Gerard Segarello."²¹ In fact, Salimbene's intense hatred takes a violent turn when, while quoting Macc. 12.54, he suggests that the church make war upon the Apostles to utterly wipe out any memory of them.²²

Salimbene also accused members of the Order of Apostles of lacking the virtues of chastity and morality. He calls into question the morality of the Apostles and their founder by relating a story in which Segarelli, while staying at the home of a widow, asserted that God revealed to him that he should sleep all night nude with her beautiful daughter in order to test whether he could preserve his chastity.²³ But the account of the incident ends there, without mention of whether Segarelli passed or failed this test.²⁴ When one considers Salimbene's inclusion of even the most mundane details in his chronicle, it is unlikely that he simply forgot to mention the outcome. What is more likely is that Segarelli did indeed pass the test of chastity, whereas Salimbene believed the story itself scandalous enough to make Segarelli appear licentious. In relating this test of chastity, Salimbene conveniently failed to acknowledge that it had long been used by Christian ascetics to prove their conquest of their carnal desires.²⁵ Segarelli was merely following a lengthy ascetic tradition that extended back to the earliest days of Christian origins. But for the chronicler, Segarelli's test was not about piety at all, but simple, base carnal pleasure.

The discrepancy between Salimbene's account and the reality of the Order of Apostles' practices has its roots in a long Christian tradition of tension between piety and pleasure. From some of the earliest letters of Paul and the teachings of Jesus, early Christian communities defined "pleasure" as gratification of carnal, as opposed to spiritual, desires.²⁶ Over the first few centuries of the Christian era, the definition of what constituted sinful—and therefore damning—pleasure included a wide range of activities such as sex (even within marriage), theft, gluttony, and sloth. Pursuit of this type of satisfaction was believed to draw one away

from God and salvation and lead to eternal damnation, not just for the individual, but also for others who were brought down with them, either direct participants in the sin or those corrupted by mere knowledge of it. Central to this belief system was the Augustinian notion that, due to original sin, all things of the flesh (including the human body itself) were by association corrupt and to be avoided as pitfalls to salvation.²⁷ To be pious then, one ought to actively reject all carnal pleasures, from sex to money, to lavish clothing, to fine food and even, some would argue, all material possessions in general.

As for the group as a whole, Salimbene not only characterized them as idle and lazy, he also fancied them base womanizers who used the guise of religiosity to engage in lewd and improper sexual activities. The disrobing ceremony, particularly the presence of a woman in a room filled with men stripped so that even their genitals were exposed, lent itself not only to ridicule but also to the implied accusation that it was really a preparation for fornication.²⁸ In fact, Salimbene asserted that many men, “seducers, deceivers, thieves and fornicators,” joined Segarelli’s Order precisely so that they could more easily sin.²⁹ Thus their wandering about was not the result of mendicant itinerancy, but rather an extension of their lust. “All day long,” he claimed, “they ran through the city looking for women.”³⁰ By his account, the Apostles did not win over to the Order virtuous or pious women, but rather whores and seductresses with whom they willingly committed sins of the flesh.³¹ According to Merlo, Salimbene believed that the absence of women among the Franciscans sustained that Order’s legitimacy, while their presence caused the downfall of the Apostles.³²

As if this violation of chastity was not scandalous enough, Salimbene claimed that male Apostles engaged in illicit sexual activities with other men and even young boys.³³ In this case, Salimbene relied on a stereotypical accusation of homosexuality, often leveled at nonconformists or heretics, in an effort to discredit members of the Order by directly attacking their morality. In countering these standard charges, historian John Boswell has claimed:

It does not seem likely that persons willing to suffer gruesome deaths for the sake of restoring Christianity to its early purity would have preached sexual license of any sort, homosexual or heterosexual, and there is no reliable evidence that most heretics’ sexual mores differed from those of their Catholic contemporaries except in the direction of greater restraint. There is, on the other hand, considerable reason to suspect ecclesiastical officials of wishing to portray heretics in the most damaging light possible, and sexual peculiarities were singularly useful for this purpose in the changing climate of opinion of the thirteenth century.³⁴

According to Boswell, the implication of sodomy was meant to stigmatize opposing groups based more on formulaic charges than on fact.³⁵ By accusing

the Apostles of various acts of fornication, both heterosexual and homosexual, Salimbene hoped to further tarnish their image as a valid and proper outlet for religious devotion, and instead turn people back to supporting the Franciscans.

Although Salimbene claimed that certain Apostles revealed the details of these sexual transgressions to him, there is often a profound difference between reality and Salimbene's fantasy. Thus it is quite likely that these Apostles did indeed seek out prostitutes and other socially marginalized women, but for salvation not fornication. With their penchant for biblical imitation, and even outside their evident literalism, the Apostles likely believed that helping prostitutes out of sin followed Christ's example. Their opponents viewed this association between an ascetic holy man and sinful women as a sign of immorality and vice, which cast their decency, morality, and, above all, their religious sincerity into question. These accusations against the Apostles reveal more about Salimbene's fears and prejudices than they do about the group's behavior, and underscore his use of a standard discourse often deployed to stigmatize groups deemed illegitimate.

RIVALRY AND LEGITIMACY

Salimbene's misogynistic views were part of his larger hatred of the Apostles that stemmed from the intense rivalry between his own Order and Segarelli's. Salimbene saw the Franciscans and the Dominicans as the perfect representatives of the Christian ideals of poverty and mendicancy, "useful to the church and sent for the salvation of the world."³⁶ All other new orders were mere imitators. Believing that these new orders were somehow diluting their mission, Salimbene writes that "we and the Dominicans taught mendicancy to all men and now virtually anyone will adopt a hood and want to start a mendicant order."³⁷ Segarelli was a case in point. Salimbene considered him so unoriginal that he must take virtually every idea or innovation from the Minorites, including their cord and sandals, because "whoever wants to start some new order always steals something from the Franciscans."³⁸ Salimbene was shocked that Segarelli had the audacity to think that the efforts of the Apostles were meritorious or worthwhile. He insisted that:

if Gerard Segarelli had done so, that is, if he had listened to words of advice, he would have returned to the hoe with his peasants and tended to the pigs and the cows, and that would have been better than going foolishly about the world, defrauding the poor of their alms and generating contempt among the Christian people.³⁹

Simply put, Segarelli needed to return to the obscurity from which he emerged and leave the *vita apostolica* to the "real" mendicants, the Franciscans.

As Salimbene believed that the Apostles were usurping the rightful role of the Mendicants, he considered all the actions of the Order useless for both themselves and the rest of the Christian faithful. One of Salimbene's recurring criticisms is that the Apostles were simply lazy imposters who used the concept of apostolic poverty to trick their targets into supporting them. He repeatedly accuses Segarelli and his followers of "wandering all day long like vagabonds through the cities and the world, not wanting to work but rather to live on the sweat and labor of others."⁴⁰ Although the practice of relying on charity is shared by both the Apostles and the Franciscans, Salimbene contends that the difference lies in the services and functions provided by his Order. According to Salimbene, in return for the *prebenda*, the revenue derived from lands granted them, priests:

have certain duties to perform: preaching, saying the mass, listening to the confessions of sins, giving sound advice, saying prayers for the living and the dead, leading a holy life and demonstrating this through holy and honorable conduct . . . And this is exactly what these men do not do, either because they do not want to, desiring to follow earthly and fleshly comforts or, more likely, because they do not have the knowledge.⁴¹

Since they lacked the proper education, because they were "useless" for preaching and, more importantly for Salimbene, because, as he claimed, they failed to truly uphold the ideals of obedience, poverty, and chastity as practiced by his order, the Apostles were not fit to call themselves a proper religious order.⁴² Moreover, Salimbene's use of powerfully loaded terms such as *utilis* and *inutilis* carries with it an eschatological threat, for in the Gospels the "useless" servant is cast into the outer darkness.⁴³ Yet, despite Salimbene's claims, J. C. De Haan has discovered evidence from Bologna that not only did the Apostles preach there, they also assisted the sick, thus performing a vital and useful role.⁴⁴ The fact that the Apostles were indeed referred to as an order, coupled with their widespread support among both ecclesiastics and the laity, astonished Salimbene who firmly believed that they did not serve a valid religious function.⁴⁵ According to Grado G. Merlo, Segarelli's vision of a poor and penitential evangelical life was completely incompatible with Salimbene's wealthy and privileged universe that had become increasingly isolated from the world-view of the laity.⁴⁶

His inability to comprehend these sentiments indicates the extent to which he and the Franciscans had lost the popular support so evident in the first half of the thirteenth century. Thus when Salimbene rationalizes the utility of the Franciscans on the grounds that they earn their *prebenda*, though he is trying to show that the Apostles earn nothing, he in fact reveals how established the

Franciscans have become and how far they have moved from the original ideas of Francis.⁴⁷ In fact, the complications inherent in possessing such wealth eventually led to the factionalism of the Spiritual Franciscans, who advocated a return to strict poverty for their Order in accordance with the teachings of Francis himself. Indeed, his rivalry with Segarelli's movement appears, in large part, mostly economic and stemmed from his fear that the Apostles would receive donations typically reserved for the Franciscans.⁴⁸

The Franciscans had become visibly wealthy, no longer living solely off the charity of others, and this absence of poverty, absolutely central to the life and teachings of Francis himself, gave rise to criticism from both within and without. According to David Burr, as early as 1257, scarcely three decades after the death of St. Francis, many among the laity regarded the Minorites with "loathing and contempt" because of their aimless wandering and excessive begging, for which, Salimbene's claim notwithstanding, they offered little in return.⁴⁹ Ironically, this was the same criticism Salimbene leveled at the Apostles.

Despite Salimbene's rivalry with and hatred of Gerard Segarelli and the Apostles, and his consequent distortion of their activities, the Order enjoyed relatively widespread ecclesiastical support and its membership continued to increase. Although the Second Council of Lyons in 1274 attempted to curb the proliferation of new mendicant orders by reiterating the 1215 Lateran ban on all new religious orders, it was not until 1286, a quarter century after its foundation, that the Order of Apostles encountered direct papal disapproval. Two events occurred in that year that compromised the orthodox status of the Apostles. In Bologna, three men, claiming to be of the Order of Apostles convinced a newlywed couple to abstain from sexual relations until given their permission. Then, each "Apostle," posing as the husband, proceeded to have sex with the new bride. Upon discovering that he had been duped and his wife raped, the husband had the men arrested and hanged by the podestà of Bologna.⁵⁰

The second, and possibly related, event of 1286 was publication of the bull *Olim felicitis recordationis* by Pope Honorius IV, which admonished the Apostles to forsake their attire, cease admitting new members, and to enter an established order. When Pope Nicholas IV repeated the admonition of *Olim felicitis* in 1290 it was apparent that the Apostles had been openly disobedient, yet it was another 4 years before any members of the Order were convicted of heresy and burned at the stake in Parma.⁵¹ Also in 1294, bishop Obizzo Sanvitale, for many years a supporter of the Apostles, placed Segarelli under house arrest for his own protection, where he remained incarcerated for the next 6 years on undisclosed charges of heresy.⁵² In 1300, Segarelli was summoned before an inquisitorial tribunal. Refusing to renounce his adherence to the ideal of poverty, Gerard Segarelli was burnt as a heretic on July 18 of the same year.

CONCLUSION

Despite Segarelli's end under the stigma of heresy, a large cross-section of northern Italian society had supported the ideals of poverty and penance that he and the Apostles preached. In fact, even after the trials and burnings of other Apostolic Brothers in the last decade of the thirteenth century, support continued as individual citizens in Bologna, Parma, and elsewhere bequeathed donatives to the Order.⁵³ With such widespread support and popularity, it is highly unlikely that Salimbene's wild claims about the Order's sexual immorality were anything more than fanciful slander intended to discredit a rival group following the apostolic lifestyle so popular at the time. Salimbene's assertion that the Apostles were nothing more than an ignorant band of useless peasants is thus thoroughly undermined by their popularity. This widespread, open support of the Apostles confirms that they were indeed an accepted religious order that was initiated, not by an illiterate fool, but by a man who believed that the only true way to follow Christ was to live as his Apostles did, communally, poor, and penitent.

Descent into Heresy

In the years following Gerard Segarelli's first public preaching about the *vita apostolica* in 1260, the Order's initial ideals of poverty and penance underwent significant development and refinement. Some members, though not all, began to believe and teach that their penitential lifestyle singled them out for special divine consideration, that they were the true followers of the original apostles, and that the Order offered the only legitimate route to salvation. The Order, which had originally sought papal approval for its orthodoxy and sought to work within the parameters of medieval Christian life, gradually began to criticize the church overtly because of its persistent harassment, repeated injunctions that they desist from their activities, and ultimately the trial and execution of various Apostles, including the founder, Gerard Segarelli. What the Apostles had started as a call to individual poverty and repentance developed into widespread accusations and condemnations not just of ecclesiastical wealth but also of papal authority and the status of the institutional church. The beliefs and actions of the Order continued to attract new members and gained them many new supporters, both men and women, which attests to the Order's appeal and longevity, despite (or maybe because of) ecclesiastical persecution.

LEADERSHIP AND CONFLICT

One way to account for the change in the Order's beliefs can be traced to Gerard Segarelli's refusal to assume authority or provide direct leadership in the group's early years. According to Salimbene, Segarelli never wanted to "take on the leadership of his congregation," even though his companions had requested him to.¹ Moreover, in keeping with the Order's egalitarian ideals, Segarelli insisted that members were responsible for their own actions, subject to the judgment of God alone. Drawing support from various texts, including Proverbs, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, Segarelli reasoned that a central authority figure was unnecessary for the governance of the Order.² Whether consciously or not, Segarelli followed the same line of reasoning as his earlier counterpart, Francis of Assisi. Opting for simple rules of governance and promoting individual responsibility, Francis rejected titles, like *prior*, which implied that one brother

had authority over and was somehow superior to other members, and instead employed titles such as “minister,” “guardian,” and “custodian.”³ According to historian David Burr, order and obedience were achieved primarily by “listening to the Word of God and to the spirit,” with the “brotherhood in a diffuse sense” being the intermediary of such communication, and not a figure such as an abbot.⁴ In the case of both Orders, however, certain individual members did take the initiative and assumed the reins of authority, but with different results. In the case of the Franciscans, the order’s developing hierarchy allowed for the orderly spread of its membership, while the Apostles experienced immediate rifts and tensions among various contenders.⁵

The dispute among the Apostles began when Guido Putagio, brother of the *podestà* of Bologna, entered the Order in its early years. Receiving his information from both the Apostle Robert and Guido, himself a close friend and companion of Salimbene, the Franciscan chronicler noted that when Guido saw that Segarelli “did not take up the authority himself, he vigorously assumed leadership himself, holding it for many years.”⁶ Guido not only took over leadership of the Order, but also used his position to live lavishly, in violation of the ideals of communalism and poverty established for the group by Segarelli. Brother Guido marched about in an exceedingly pompous manner “with many mounted riders, spending lavishly and providing many feasts, just as legates or cardinals of the Roman curia are wont to do.”⁷

These actions naturally offended many of the other Apostles, who responded by renouncing Guido and choosing a new leader who shared their view of the Order. This group, from the nearby March of Ancona, selected an Apostle named Matthew to guide them, thereby splitting the Order of Apostles into at least two opposing factions.⁸ The existence of these two leaders initiated a protracted dispute between the two groups that ultimately erupted into violent conflict in the city of Faenza, which had become the base of operations for Brother Guido’s faction. According to Salimbene, Guido had been living in a small church there with a few brothers and apparently Gerard Segarelli himself. Matthew’s faction from Ancona, wanting their “purer” apostolicism to be the Order’s standard, planned to take Segarelli from Guido’s faction by force and so launched an attack against their rivals. The plan failed when Matthew’s faction was beaten back by Guido’s small band.⁹

Segarelli’s assessment of this division is not made clear and in fact Salimbene’s story conveys merely passivity, as if Segarelli himself was simply an object to be passed around by the more active members of the Order. It is possible that Segarelli’s presence among Guido’s faction amounted to approval, but it is more likely that Segarelli was held captive. In either case, there is no record of Segarelli’s true position regarding the rift and we must assume that he was being true to his earlier statements regarding individualism and order, and simply let the Order develop without interfering.

Segarelli's refusal to provide active, personal leadership meant that his ideas about poverty could develop without regulation and without regard to his original intent. This potential for freedom of interpretation, coupled with external pressures, accounts in part for some of the heretical changes that occurred in the order's ideology.

VITA APOSTOLICA REDUX

The best source for understanding this shift from orthodoxy to heterodoxy in the later history of the Order is Bernard Gui's *Practica Inquisitionis Heretice Pravitatis*, written between 1309 and 1322.¹⁰ As a Dominican, Bernard Gui was intimately familiar with the procedures of the inquisition; Pope Clement V had appointed him inquisitor for the diocese of Toulouse, in southern France, early in 1307. Gui served in Toulouse until eventually appointed bishop of Lodève in 1324, a post he held until his death in 1331.¹¹ Designed as a manual for his fellow inquisitors, the *Practica* consists of five parts: the first three concern sentencing guidelines, the fourth contains papal and canonical documents relating to the scope and power of inquisitors, and the fifth and most important part for the present study provides detailed accounts of the peculiar beliefs of various heretical groups, including Cathars, Waldensians, the Apostles, Beguines, Jews, and "sorcerers," as well as instructions for interrogating members from each of these groups.¹²

Like Salimbene's *Cronica*, Gui's *Practica* presents certain obstacles to a proper understanding of the Order of Apostles. The main problem with this work is that Gui wrote it at least 3–10 years after Dolcino's execution for heresy and sedition, and thus, for him, all followers of the group's interpretation of the *vita apostolica* fell under the shadow of heresy, whether or not they actively supported such ideals. Gui's *Practica* is useful nonetheless for its insight into the unique beliefs and practices of the Order of Apostles precisely because its author had the authority of his inquisitorial office and the discipline of his systematic exposition. Gui's *Practica* does not contain the *ad hominem* attacks or character assassination found in Salimbene's *Cronica*. Moreover, Gui's discussion of the Order's beliefs after Salimbene's death and the end of the *Cronica* in 1288 reveal just how far its members had moved from the simple and, more importantly, orthodox message of Gerard Segarelli. According to Gui's description in the *Practica*, although many beliefs and practices of the Order of Apostles remained the same well after the execution of both Segarelli and Dolcino, new heretical elements, such as the negation of the legitimacy of the Roman Church, had also found their way into the group's tenets.

Many of the Order's beliefs and practices concerning poverty, penance, and renunciation of material wealth remained virtually unchanged since the Order's

inception in 1260. Initiation into the group still involved the repudiation of all of one's property and belongings, following the earlier example set forth by Gerard Segarelli. Mirroring the ritual noted in the *Cronica*, Gui noted that the initiate "divests himself of all his garments, as a sign of abnegation, and renounces all that he possesses as a sign of the perfection of evangelical poverty."¹³ After such an initiation, the new member was prohibited from accepting, possessing, or carrying any money, but instead had to live solely from the charity of others, "saving nothing for the morrow."¹⁴ Taken together with Salimbene's observation that members of the Apostles traded their clothes amongst themselves, these rites reinforced the group's understanding that evangelical poverty was also evangelical equality, for all members were equally poor and thus devoid of any indication of class or status.

Continuing the tradition that Segarelli initiated, members of the Order still wore their particular habits of coarse wool that, though modeled on the garb of the original apostles, bore a striking resemblance to Franciscan attire.¹⁵ The adoption of clothing similar to or copied from an established religious order should be seen as an attempt by the Order to assimilate itself to a valid and orthodox movement. Bernard Gui, however, saw a more deceitful and nefarious intent behind the wearing of such attire since they were not an approved order and, more importantly, because adopting such a habit was prohibited by the church, "lest one who is not of a religious order should, on account of his habit, appear to be one."¹⁶ For Gui, not only did their adoption of quasi-Franciscan garb violate church policy, it was also a façade used to deceive the faithful into thinking the Order was proper and upstanding.

Gui's manual also has much to say about the daily activities of the Order that appeared pious and sincere. Public preaching, or at least public proclamations, continued to be an integral part of the Order's communal activities since its inception. According to Gui, the Apostles would often say, "Watch and pray, for this is good for the soul." They also recited the *Pater noster*, the *Ave Maria*, and the Creed. Showing some knowledge of Scripture, group members also recited various lines from the Gospel of Matthew, such as "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Mt. 4.17) and "Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid," (Mt. 10.16) In addition to the above, the Apostles also sang the *Salve Regina* as well as other hymns and songs. As they traveled around between various towns and villages, they still called out their traditional exhortation, "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Interestingly, Gui referred to the Apostles' call to penance in the traditional Latin (*Penitentiam agite, appropinquabit enim regnum celorum!*), making no reference to the vernacular cry of "*Penitencagite!*" that Salimbene accused Segarelli of garbling. Indeed, in the *Practica* Gui does not make any references to the Apostles as a predominately

unlettered, lower-class or peasant movement, a presentation quite different in tone from Salimbene's in his *Cronica*.¹⁷

Members of the Order also participated in public meals that not only reinforced their communalism but also served to show the extent of their embrace of the *vita apostolica*. For their meals, according to Gui, members of the Order ate publicly in the streets of whatever town or village they happened to be in, while the local inhabitants supplied not only the food that they ate, but also the table at which they sat, effectively using their meals as a spectacle in reinforcing their apostolicism.¹⁸ Lacking a biblical example that the original Apostles begged for furniture as well, the donation of a table can be interpreted as either innovation on their part, or exaggeration by Gui. The fact that the Apostles could depend on community support for their meals reveals the extent of public support for the group, even several decades after their foundation. The foreswearing of ownership extended even to the food itself, for upon leaving the table after a meal, the Apostles would not take the bread, wine, or anything else with them, but would leave it all behind. For the Apostles and their supporters (or audience), such actions showed the extreme nature of their apostolic poverty and indicated that they were "the perfect poor of Christ, having as it were, no thought of the morrow, nor having house or home."¹⁹ It is also quite possible that public rituals such as these constituted a subtle critique of the other mendicant orders, especially the Franciscans who, though they took vows of poverty, apparently did not live up to apostolic standards.²⁰ In fact, according to at least two inquisitorial trial transcripts from Bologna, dated November 17 and 18, 1299 respectively, members or supporters of the Apostles referred to the group as the *minimi*, or "least brothers," challenging the Franciscan designation as *minores*, or "lesser brothers."²¹

Writing after Segarelli and Dolcino had both been burned as heretics, Gui considered these actions of the Apostles as a ruse designed to lure the unsuspecting faithful into their heretical fold. In his manual, Gui is guilty of a teleological smear: the Apostles were always what they became. Gui claimed that their usual method of "persuasion" consisted of saying prayers, singing hymns, and reciting lines of Scripture, activities that "on the surface seem praiseworthy," but were done in order to attract an audience and then "ensnare them."²² Gui also insisted that the Apostles "assume the exterior signs of devotion to God, all of which at first seem good and pious to their audience. And they especially strive to outwardly appear to men as penitent and conducting a perfect life."²³ The word choice in this passage is significant because by using words such as "assume" (*pretendunt*), "appear" (*videntur*), and "seem" (*appareant*) Gui immediately invalidates any measure of authentic piety on the part of members of the Order and furthers his perception that members of the Order were posing as pious and religious in order to gain new converts and spread the infection of their heresy.²⁴

THE POWER OF POVERTY

Despite the continuity between these later practices and earlier ones, many core beliefs of the Order of Apostles underwent a significant change, from a relatively benign and nondogmatic application of evangelical poverty to one asserting that the group's *vita apostolica* granted it the special power of independent preaching and existence without interference by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. These changes, which constituted the core of the Order's heresy, were made in direct response to the church's investigations and perceived harassment of group members, especially after and as a result of Segarelli's execution in 1300. Whereas Segarelli's initial poverty movement subtly critiqued ecclesiastical, and especially Franciscan, wealth, the later Apostles directly and vehemently opposed the institutional church, openly condemning it as corrupt and even diabolical.

Some of these changes and innovations of the later Apostles appear innocuous. For example, according to Gui, the Apostles considered that it was "more perfect" to live a life without taking vows than to live under them.²⁵ Similarly, the Apostles also came to disavow most forms of oath taking unless it regarded an article of faith or the commandments of God.²⁶ These beliefs derived from the biblical literalism employed by the Apostles, especially their reading of Mt. 5.34–37 where Jesus admonishes his followers to "not swear at all." Gui reasoned that these beliefs allowed the Apostles to avoid providing vital information about their beliefs to inquisitors, asserting that because the Apostles did not believe in swearing oaths, when they were actually forced to do so by inquisitors, they could lie freely and without sin.²⁷ Gui claimed that Apostles under interrogation believed that they were under no obligation to defend their doctrine or beliefs verbally, so long as they continued to believe them in their hearts.²⁸ Moreover, Apostles encouraged each other to respond to questions by "repudiating, denying or covering" the truth in whatever way possible to keep the inquisitors from ever learning the truth about their beliefs or more importantly, their membership.²⁹ Naturally, this verbal flexibility made the inquisitors' charge much more difficult to fulfill if their subjects had learned to use deceit in self-defense. In fact, only when death became unavoidable were adherents to openly profess and defend their true faith and doctrines, and "to die patiently and resolutely," all the while revealing absolutely nothing about their associates or other believers.³⁰

By openly and directly criticizing the institutional church for apparently violating the apostolic standards of the early church, the later Apostles began to diverge from their predecessors. The basis of this criticism stemmed from the Order's own understanding and conception of the *vita apostolica*, which itself had changed from the days of Gerard Segarelli. Under Segarelli, the Order called for all to do penance and, for those who ardently wanted to live a pure life, to give up all their possessions and fully embrace the ascetic poverty of Christ and

the original apostles. Segarelli and his early followers, however, did not use this conception of the *vita apostolica* to judge or condemn other Christians for failing to live up to their standards. Yet, when ecclesiastical authorities, including inquisitors and popes, began to aggressively investigate members of the Order their beliefs changed more rapidly in response.

The first element in this change was the group's own conception of itself as "the perfect poor of Christ."³¹ The Order had applied this label to themselves early on, but under Segarelli it was an innocuous and innocent designation that likely was not intended as a critique of other Christians' lifestyles. Yet the very nature of the phrase potentially implies that while some are perfect, there must be imperfect Christians as well. This recognition of a division between perfect and imperfect could then lead to critical judgments as to just how pious and poor a true Christian needed to be. Moreover, without an active, central authority figure, it was highly likely, if not inevitable, that some Apostles would eventually interpret Segarelli's teachings as intentionally critical of the Roman Church. In fact, this is exactly what happened in the wake of Segarelli's refusal to assume direct and active leadership of the Order.³² Thus, the visible opulence of bishops, prelates, cardinals, and even popes, a consequence of the rapid economic changes from the eleventh century onward, outraged the Apostles because, in their day, Christ's earthly ministers appeared to be squandering their apostolic heritage. Without Segarelli's oversight, when these Apostles observed that they alone were following the "true" *vita apostolica*, they began to question the validity and spiritual authority of the church itself, a significant change from their founder's uncritical and neutral exhortations.

The Apostles concluded therefore that their apostolic lifestyle was the only proper manifestation of evangelical purity, and with the church hierarchy "failing" in its mission, it was up to them to promote and disseminate the "correct" path to salvation. The Order relied directly upon its very literal interpretation of the original apostles, their conduct, and their lifestyle as the basis for these beliefs. Accordingly, the Order's renunciation of private property, its refusal to accept, possess, or carry money, and its reliance upon the charity of the faithful symbolized its "perfection of evangelical poverty."³³ Believing that their Order lived in the "perfection of the first apostles," they claimed that "only those who are called Apostles are the church of God."³⁴ Their evangelical existence thus conferred on them a special status lost by the more earthly and materialistic ecclesiastical hierarchy, a status that made the Apostles the rightful and proper heirs of Christ's legacy. Indeed, they claimed that their Order alone had "the power that the blessed apostle Peter received from God," a direct challenge to the popes' claim to authority through the Petrine doctrine of apostolic succession.³⁵ Not only did the Order have the spiritual power of St. Peter, more importantly, they considered themselves as a "spiritual congregation, sent and chosen by God."³⁶ The Order

reasoned that because the Roman Church had apparently forsaken the faith of Christ and the *vita apostolica*, "all the spiritual power which Christ gave to the church at the beginning has been transferred to . . . the Order of Apostles."³⁷ They further argued that God had acted through the person of Gerard Segarelli, himself "an offshoot of God, sprouting from the root of faith," to bring His Church back "to the perfection, life, state and poverty of the primitive Church," the very condition in which Christ committed it to the apostle Peter.³⁸ These assertions, made by followers under questioning, and presumable torture, claimed for the Order both apostolic and divine sanction for its teaching and actions. In addition to usurping the church's claim to authority, the Order also claimed that due to their perfected existence "no one can be saved or enter into the kingdom of heaven unless they are of the same state or order" as the Apostles.³⁹ The Order of Apostles asserted, therefore, that they had replaced the church, becoming the only route to salvation.

As a direct consequence of this "privileged" status, the Apostles believed that no current ecclesiastical authority had any temporal or spiritual control over them and that members of the Order obeyed God alone. According to Gui, upon entering the ranks of the Apostles, initiates vowed "not to promise obedience to any mortal man, but only to God . . . subject to God alone and to no man, *just as the apostles were subject to Christ and no one else*."⁴⁰ The Order declared that this injunction meant they did not have to obey even the pope because their rule, the most perfect life, came directly from Christ.⁴¹ Claiming such divine support, the Apostles took the next logical step and asserted that "neither the pope, nor anyone else, can order them to give up that status or perfected life," nor could anyone, including the pope, excommunicate them.⁴² In fact, some of the "special questions" noted by Gui for determining if someone belonged to the Order included whether the individual believed that the church actually had any of the power granted to it by St. Peter and whether they considered themselves subject to the pope and excommunication.⁴³

According to Gui, the Apostles criticized the entire church and all its ecclesiastical offices for neglecting the *vita apostolica*, and thus proclaimed that the church had lost all its legitimacy because it had strayed from its original evangelical poverty. As a direct result of the worldliness of the church and especially the "wickedness of prelates," the Apostles taught that "all the authority formerly bestowed on the church by the Lord Jesus Christ is now utterly void and has ceased [to exist]."⁴⁴ The anticlericalism of the Order of Apostles specifically targeted the Roman pontiff and judged his worth, or lack thereof, based on their own apostolic ideals of poverty and humility. They therefore claimed that the pope lacked any spiritual power or authority "unless he is as holy as the blessed apostle Peter, living in absolute poverty and humility."⁴⁵ It should be noted that not only did the Order want the pope to fully embrace evangelical poverty, they also wanted him

to remove himself from worldly affairs by refraining from war and ending papal persecutions, simply letting everyone live freely.⁴⁶ By “persecutions” the Apostles were thinking of their own trials before papal inquisitors.

Noting that the pope, cardinals, prelates, priests, and religious orders all controlled and possessed the church, much like a piece of property, the Apostles also taught that it was not the church of God, but rather “a rejected and fruitless Church.”⁴⁷ The Order bluntly claimed that:

[A]ll the prelates of the Roman Church, both greater and lesser, from the time of St. Sylvester, after which they fell from the way of life of the first saints, are liars and seducers . . . [and] all the orders of monks, and of priests, deacons, subdeacons and prelates are a detriment to the Catholic faith; also that the laity should not and need not give tithes to any priest or prelate of the Roman Church who is not in as much a state of perfection and poverty as the first apostles.⁴⁸

The Apostles came to believe that the decline of the church stretched as far back as the time of Pope Sylvester I (314–35), because it was during this period that Christianity received recognition from the Roman emperor Constantine and therefore grew more powerful, wealthy, and worldly. Significantly, the only member of the Roman Church excluded from the above judgment of the Apostles was brother Peter de Marrone, who became Pope Celestine V in July, 1294, because of his extremely ascetic lifestyle and the fact that he abdicated his role as pope, at the end of the same year, to better embrace poverty.⁴⁹ In fact, the Apostles may have seen Celestine’s abdication as proof of their claims, assuming that such an ascetic could not tolerate the materialism and worldliness of a “corrupt” papacy.

The Order of Apostles claimed that the Roman Church was not only powerless and rejected but, even worse, it was the great whore of Babylon from the Book of Revelation that had “forsaken the faith of Christ.”⁵⁰ This is a significant theological development because it clearly reveals the battle lines being drawn between the pious and poor Apostles on the one side and the corrupt and worldly Roman Church on the other. Characterizing their ecclesiastical opponents in this way also meant that all the accusations of heresy and error from the Roman Church were invalid because they came from the enemies of God. To solidify this viewpoint, the Apostles maintained that “all who persecute them sin and are in a state of damnation and perdition.”⁵¹ By framing the theological debate in this fashion, the Apostles implied that the time for the direct manifestation of this truth was drawing near, thereby firmly placing themselves in an apocalyptic timeframe that internally validated their own beliefs, while disparaging the position of the Roman Church. Thus, the Apostles believed that the church had lost its formerly preeminent spiritual position through its lack of poverty and also

because of its persecution of those who practiced piety and poverty, that is, the Apostles themselves.

A RECEPTIVE AUDIENCE

Beginning with Gerard Segarelli's preaching in Parma in 1260 and continuing well beyond the execution of Fra Dolcino in 1307, the Order of Apostles attracted many followers and supporters with its message of evangelical poverty and penance and, later, its message of apocalyptic renewal. In fact, after the executions of Segarelli and Dolcino, medieval laypeople continued to claim membership and provide financial assistance, despite the stigma of the Order's heresy. The Order included among its number people from various towns and regions of Italy, and beyond, members of all social classes, and a significant number of women. According to the evidence in Bernard Gui's *Practica*, in addition to its message of poverty and penance, the Order's later anticlericalism also attracted adherents.

The Apostles' proclamations against the perceived abuses by the regular and secular clergy, by bishops and cardinals, and even by the pope himself resonated among the audiences of various Italian communities to such an extent that the Order's membership continued to grow not only after the execution of Segarelli, but even after the crusades against and defeat of Dolcino and his supporters in Valsesia. The very existence of Bernard Gui's manual and its lengthy section on interrogating and deposing suspected Apostles, written at least a decade after Dolcino's death, evidences this continuity. Gui specifically instructed inquisitors to ask the suspected Apostles about their country of origin and their family, why and when they left, with whom they traveled, what villages they stopped at and with whom they kept company.⁵² Gui's line of questioning reveals that people came to join the Order not only from within Italy itself, but from various other countries.

In Gui's discussion of the Order's methods of persuading potential members to join, he also indicated that the laity was receptive to their anticlerical message. He claimed that when speaking in front of the laity, the Apostles often referred to "the evil life of the prelates and the clergy," claiming that these same individuals persecute them out of hatred because the Apostles "speak and teach the truth."⁵³ In this case, as above, the Apostles set themselves apart from the institutional church by emphasizing their perfected life over and against that of "corrupt" church officials. By highlighting their "persecution," the Apostles also "proved" that their message must be true, otherwise the inquisitors would not be trying so hard to stop them. In the minds of these Apostles, and for their audiences as well, any retaliatory action simply reinforced the conviction that the church was trying to hide its corruption by silencing those who would publicize their

failings. Moreover, the fact that the Apostles would preach so openly to the laity about ecclesiastical corruption indicates that their audience was open to such criticisms. The continued support that the Apostles received in the form of alms, shelter, and food, even after the executions of Segarelli and Dolcino, confirms that the laity supported and affirmed their message.

CONCLUSION

The Order of Apostles continued to attract followers and supporters and continued to refine its position on evangelical poverty not only after papal investigations, but even after the executions of key leaders such as Gerard Segarelli and Fra Dolcino. Despite the convening of inquisitorial tribunals in Parma, Bologna, Modena, Trent, and other northern Italian cities to investigate the potential for heresy among the Order of Apostles, people from all walks of life still continued to join the ranks of the Order, or at the very least, to donate money, food, or shelter. This continued support from a variety of laypersons reveals the extent of the Order's popularity as a promoter of the *vita apostolica* several decades after its foundation. As Bernard Gui's inquisitorial manual indicates, the Order gradually began to redefine its conception of apostolic poverty, from benign concepts of poverty and penance preached by Segarelli in its early years, to a more hostile and anticlerical stance after sustained ecclesiastical persecution. Segarelli's message resonated with a large number of people deeply dissatisfied with the discrepancy they saw between the Gospel message of poverty, penance, and overall simplicity and the very real economic privileges and excesses displayed by clergy, monks, bishops, prelates, and even the pope himself—the very people who were supposed to promote and embody Christ's message. When this general dissatisfaction with the display of wealth by churchmen encountered ecclesiastical resistance in the form of papal ban and inquisitorial tribunals, a strong anticlerical strain was inevitable. But the Order's continued existence, despite ecclesiastical opposition, indicates that the laity supported the movement not just because of its later critique of the clergy, but also because it related sympathetically to the Order's desire to live the *vita apostolica* unhindered.

Apocalyptic Catastrophe

On the morning of July 18, 1300, in the town square of Parma, just off the main road, workers erected a tall wooden stake, surrounded by kindling and dried brush. As the morning wore on, a crowd began to gather, curious about the unfolding events. Before long, jailers appeared, leading a weathered, bearded man dressed in filthy rags to the stake. As he was tied to the pole, Manfred, the chief Dominican inquisitor at Parma, read the man's sentence. The charge was heresy. The punishment, administered by civil authorities, was cremation while yet alive. Once lit, the fire grew quickly, consuming both wood and man until nothing remained but ash and bone. After 40 years of poverty and penance, Gerard Segarelli's life came to a gruesome and torturous end. The man directly responsible for the execution, Manfred, thought that the errors of the Order of Apostles would be consumed in the flames along with Segarelli, but they had only just begun.¹

The death of Segarelli ended nearly half a century of peaceful activity by the Order of Apostles. In the years following Segarelli's execution, the ideas of the Apostles would undergo a profound change as the group's focus evolved under the influence of a new leader. In fact, only 7 years after Segarelli's death, most of the remaining Apostles found themselves exhausted and hungry, besieged by a crusading army in the mountains north of the cities of Vercelli and Novara. This group was radically different from the wandering beggars and preachers of 30 years before. What happened to cause such a drastic change in an initially peaceful group? The answer can be found, at least partially, immediately prior to the change in the Order's leadership in 1300 and the subsequent persecutions the group suffered. Beginning with the execution of four Apostles in Parma in 1294 and continuing with the imprisonment and burning of Segarelli in 1300, the Order of Apostles experienced the wrath of ecclesiastical authorities weary of the group's insubordination.

This ecclesiastical persecution provoked a drastic change in the group's understanding of itself and of its place in history. This chapter examines the Order's shift in ideology from simple apostolic poverty to radical apocalyptic poverty.² As above, I use the term "apostolic" poverty in the sense of a return to the purity and simplicity that many, both inside and outside the Order of Apostles, believed characteristic of the early church. The change to "apocalyptic" poverty is momentous because as the Order continued to emphasize renunciation of worldly goods and communal living, its members also began to believe that this renunciation

made them the true inheritors of the power and grace that Christ bestowed upon the apostle Peter. This special inheritance was only possible because the Order came to believe that the western, Latin Church, as led by the popes and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, had become materially corrupt and a tool of the Antichrist, the enemy of all "true" Christians. According to the Order, this corruption, coupled with the harassment and persecution of the Apostles, was a clear indication that the church had abandoned its apostolic charge and that the end of the world as foretold in the book of Revelation was at hand. It therefore became the Order's perceived right, even its duty, to replace the debased church in the last days.

Under Gerard Segarelli, the Order of Apostles had placed no particular emphasis on a specific understanding of the progression of Christian history or of the end of that history in the apocalypse. Their different focus was rather on the concept of evangelical poverty and its relation to holiness and sanctity in one's daily life. The exclusive interest in penance and voluntary poverty, however, changed considerably after the execution of Segarelli and the assumption of the group's leadership by one of Segarelli's disciples in Parma, Fra Dolcino of the Valsesia region of northern Piedmont. With the death of the Order's original leader in July of 1300 and the subsequent interrogations, imprisonments, and burnings by Dominican inquisitors, Dolcino and his followers became convinced that the Roman Church had been corrupted by its worldly possessions and its apparent hunger for total dominance and power. In response to these developments, Dolcino wrote a series of three letters "to the faithful," in 1300, 1303, and 1306 respectively, that explicitly laid out his conviction that the apocalypse was near. He predicted a fiery, cataclysmic end to the corrupt church and salvation only for a select group of true believers.³

DOLCINO AND VIOLENCE

Most biographers of Dolcino have unambiguously claimed that he was the illegitimate son of a priest from Novara, thereby immediately undermining his religious sincerity, and, by association, the Order's. This false accusation has its basis in the history of the Order, *De Secta Pseudo-Apostolorum*, written by the Dominican inquisitor Bernard Gui around 1316, in which Gui explicitly states that Dolcino was the illegitimate son of a priest (*spurius filius sacerdotis*).⁴ However, a more obscure *Historia Fratris Dulcini Heresiarche*, an anonymous eyewitness account of Dolcino's rebellion, mentions only that Dolcino was the son of Julius Presbyter of Tarecontano, in Valle d'Ossola.⁵ Considering that an avid supporter of ecclesiastical authorities wrote the *Historia*, and because the author made no attempt to hide his utter disgust with the Apostles, it seems unlikely that he would have overlooked a fact as important as Dolcino's illegitimacy.⁶ More importantly, historian

Raniero Orioli has conclusively shown that Bernard Gui's *De Secta* maliciously manipulated the initial description of Dolcino found in the *Historia* in order to delegitimize the Order's new leader.⁷

Dolcino's early history prior to assuming the leadership of the Apostles is fragmentary at best. In fact, aside from the two discussions of his paternity mentioned above, the only other source, albeit a much later one, that provides information about Dolcino's life prior to 1300 is Benvenuto da Imola's commentary on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, written in approximately 1376.⁸ According to the commentary, Dolcino joined the Apostles around 1291, most likely in Parma, remaining with the Order for almost a decade until the execution of Segarelli. The shock of the founder's death rocked the Apostles and it was during the tumultuous summer of 1300 that Dolcino wrote the first of his three apocalyptic letters that would forever change the Order of Apostles. Soon thereafter, Dolcino and other local Apostles fled north toward Trent, hoping to outrun the inquisitorial nets being cast from Parma and Bologna. After meeting Alberto, the leader of a group of Apostles in the small village of Cimego, near Lake Garda, Dolcino appears to have begun actively preaching throughout the region near Trent, but especially in the lake towns of Arco and Cimego.⁹ It was during this period of itinerant preaching that Dolcino met two of his followers who would remain with him until their deaths, Longino Cattaneo of Bergamo and Margherita of Trent. Though information on Longino is scarce, the *Historia*, the *De Secta* and Benvenuto's *Comentum* together provide details about Margherita.¹⁰ Margherita, a wealthy noblewoman, had apparently left a convent near Trent to preach poverty alongside Alberto and, later, Dolcino. Like Tripia Putagio, who had joined Segarelli's Apostles in Bologna, Margherita's membership in the Order signified both the continued support of nobles and, more importantly, of women, especially those who sought a more active and vigorous role in their own salvation.¹¹

Taking Segarelli's ideal of voluntary poverty to an extreme, Fra Dolcino brought to the group heavy doses of apocalyptic imagery, an attribute almost completely absent from Segarelli's thought.¹² In his letters, Dolcino claimed that in these last days the Order of Apostles was specially sent by God as a remedy for the corrupt nature of the church. Already ostracized and marginalized by papal condemnation and the execution of Segarelli, Dolcino's Apostles underwent a radical shift from the benign poverty under its founder to a form of extreme militarism and resistance.

Considering the brutal ending they endured, and apparently saw coming, one may ask what was it about Fra Dolcino's beliefs that inspired so many men and women to follow him into the mountains, openly rebelling against their ecclesiastical and secular rulers. The answer lies in his strict observance of the ideals of asceticism, penance, and poverty promoted by Gerard Segarelli and his

introduction of an intensely apocalyptic eschatology, most directly influenced by the earlier apocalyptic visionary, Joachim of Fiore. Dolcino took Joachim's writings about the End Times and transformed them into his own unique vision that gave special preference and standing to those who followed his interpretation of the *vita apostolica*. To better understand Dolcino's use of apocalyptic imagery and his understanding of history, it is necessary to explain in some detail the apocalypticism of Joachim himself.

APOCALYPTIC SPIRITUALITY

I have an obligation not to keep silent about the wrath of the Judge so soon to be revealed from heaven upon all the wickedness and injustice of men who are unwilling to do penance for their sins.¹³

This ominous quotation comes from a man who has had a profound impact upon the thought and imagination of Western Europe since the twelfth century. The author was Joachim of Fiore, the Calabrian monk renowned for his apocalypticism and his intricate and elaborate understanding of history. Born at Celico in the southern region of Calabria, Italy, around 1135, Joachim is often regarded as an enigmatic figure due to his elaborate eschatological schemes. Before his death in 1202, Joachim created the *figurae*, drawings and diagrams that visually conveyed his conception of the course of history. He also wrote many works regarding the End of Time as well as the relationship between the Old and New Testaments for understanding the course of human and divine history. When considering the extent to which his later "followers" distorted many of Joachim's writings, we must begin by understanding what Joachim himself thought about history and the coming Apocalypse.¹⁴

Dedicating himself to God after a journey to the Holy Land, Joachim lived for a while as a hermit, then became a wandering preacher in Calabria, finally entering the monastery of Corazzo. At the end of his novitiate, around 1181, Joachim was elected abbot but refused to serve on account of his desire to pursue his spiritual insights through writing. Frustrated with monastic rules and obligations that impeded his work, Joachim decided to go directly to the pope for permission to write. In May 1184, Pope Lucius III agreed to a meeting, at which time Joachim revealed his unique understanding of the concordance of both testaments and so greatly impressed the pope that he signed Joachim's license almost immediately.¹⁵

Joachim's dissatisfaction with the monastic bureaucracy led him, around 1190, to found a new house on his own at Fiore, in the remote Sila region of Calabria. Here, the Florentian Order had its beginning, winning papal approval by Pope

Celestine III in 1196. It was during this period that Joachim wrote his three most influential works, the *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, the *Liber Concordiae*, and the *Liber Psalterii Decem Chordarum*. It should be noted that Joachim's discontent was not directed at the church as a whole, nor at the papacy, but rather at what he saw as temporal, bureaucratic obstructions to spiritual insights. Joachim's orthodoxy is attested to by his adherence to church regulations and his search for papal approval. It was also during this period that Joachim devised his unique conception of history that was to have a major impact not only on Dolcino, but numerous others as well.¹⁶

Joachim felt an urgent need to express his new understanding of history and especially of the end times, but initially kept this insight to himself in order to avoid causing any trouble. Joachim asserted that:

For some time I wished to cast anchor in the harbor of silence in deference to my priors, so as not to seem to stir up scandal or bickering in Christ's Church, especially because of those who run about more than others shouting, "Thus saith the Lord," when He has not commissioned them.¹⁷

Joachim's statement concerning the spread of divine truth reveals a concern, a restraint even, against taking any sort of interpretive initiative upon himself without papal authorization. He insisted upon separating himself from unsanctioned, false prophets, implying that the very vocal nature of these prophets had been, and still was, a threat to church order and stability. Joachim did not want to be seen as another false prophet, but merely as a humble man sanctioned by God and ecclesiastical authorities to reveal the true understanding of history and Scripture.

A crucial step in his process of understanding time and God's relation to it occurred one night to Joachim as he meditated upon the Apocalypse. Joachim related that he was suddenly hit with a burst of insight where "the fullness of this book [Revelation] and of the entire agreement of the Old and the New Testaments was perceived by a clarity of understanding in my mind's eye."¹⁸ What was revealed to Joachim was a way to view the Testaments as entirely complementary, with the Revelation of John confirming the synthesis.

Essential for comprehending Joachim's ideas is his concept of the Trinity. Joachim relates the Trinity to the Testaments by claiming that due to the existence of two divine persons (The Father and the Son) there exist two Testaments.¹⁹ As the Father and Son are equal and parallel, so too are key features of the Testaments. Specific figures in the Old, such as Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, have their parallels in the New, as Zachary, Elisabeth, and John the Baptist. Joachim insisted that these pairs were not to be considered allegorical, but true parallels that implied a direct relationship between the Old and New Testaments.²⁰

Joachim applied this understanding to the Trinity and its relation to the Testaments. For Joachim, the two Testaments each have their own individual meaning and significance, but together they point to something greater. Using the Trinity with regards to Scripture, he wrote, "there is one Father to whom the Old Testament especially pertains, [and] one Son of God to whom the New Testament pertains especially."²¹ The further understanding that comes from this combination he assigned to the Holy Spirit, which Joachim perceived as proceeding from both Testaments and carrying with it a "mystical understanding" of the Testaments.²² He went on to create further distinctions among the Testaments, assigning the Old more to the flesh and the New more to the spirit. Joachim, however, noted carefully that, like the Trinity, Scripture is a complete whole, not divided into separate entities; "it must be recalled that there were indications of the spirit in the former, reminders of the flesh in the latter."²³

Perhaps the best visual expression of Joachim's Trinitarian concepts is the *figura* known as the "Three Trinitarian Circles."²⁴ This figure of three interlocking rings corresponds directly to the Trinity, with each ring assigned an aspect of the Trinity. The first ring is that of the Father, the second that of the Son, and the third that of the Holy Spirit. Joachim primarily associated the circle of the Father with the Old Testament, that of the Son with the New Testament. Again, each is not wholly distinct, for like the Trinity itself, all are a part of the One, hence the overlapping of the Testaments into other circles. Intricately connected with the Trinitarian Circles is Joachim's conception of three *status* (epochs or ages) of time.²⁵ Each of these *status*, like the circles that represent them, has a particular quality or concept associated with it. Before explaining the three *status*, it must be understood that Joachim conceived of these periods as different, yet not entirely separate periods of time.

Joachim ascribed the first *status* to the time under which people served the Law, being unable to attain true freedom of the spirit until the advent of Jesus Christ.²⁶ The period of the Law he associated with both marriage and the flesh. Joachim did not present the flesh as something evil, as the Cathars did, but merely as imperfect. The first *status* is designated the married order due to its association with the Father. Joachim explained that, "as the Father is the Father because He has a Son, so the married order has been established by God solely in order to procreate sons."²⁷ Not only does this order illustrate the specific quality of the first *status*, but it also reinforces the previous assertion that the flesh is not evil, for the Son as flesh is a creation of the Father and sanctioned by him. According to Joachim, "this *status* is rightly associated with the flesh and with the temporal, having its beginning in Adam and its consummation in Christ."²⁸ The end of the first *status* in Christ is not seen as a clear, definite ending, for the *status* overlap in time, as we will see below.

Joachim relates the second *status*, that of the Son, to the New Testament and to a new order. He envisioned this *status* as an intermediary between flesh and

spirit, assigning it to the clergy. He explained that “as the blood is the medium between the flesh and the soul, so the clerical order is the medium between the married and the monks [those of the third *status*].”²⁹ Compared to the first *status*, the second is marked by a sense of spiritual freedom from the imperfections of the flesh, but not as much freedom as when compared to the coming third *status*.³⁰ This second *status* also differs from the first in its purpose and intent. Whereas in the first *status*, the ideal was procreation and population, in the second, one finds the establishment of preaching the way of the Lord and the teaching of His rules.³¹ Joachim saw this *status* as the midpoint between the two poles of flesh and spirit.³²

Considering the fact that Joachim applied the Old Testament to the first *status* and the New Testament to the second *status*, should one assume that the third *status* will have its own book as well, a third Testament? By no means. What does come in the final *status* is the aforementioned spiritual understanding of the two Testaments, directly influenced by and connected to the Holy Spirit. The mode of life identified with this final *status* is that of the monastic order. Far removed from the fleshly existence of the first *status* and the intermediate aspect of the second, Joachim deemed the third “spiritual,” “because it walks not according to the flesh but according to the spirit.”³³ Joachim claimed that monks are able to distance themselves from the world and hence the flesh because they are offered something much more rewarding, that is, the Love of God.³⁴ The beginning of this *status* of the Holy Spirit appears at first confusing, for Joachim ascribed two different times to it. He claimed that it began in one way with Elisha the prophet and in another way with St Benedict.³⁵ The explanation is actually quite simple if one keeps the orthodox concept of the Trinity in mind. Considering the belief in the creed *Filioque*, the Holy Spirit must proceed from both the Father and the Son. Therefore, this third period must have two beginnings to signify its procession from both Father and Son.

The Holy Spirit does seem to take on a personality of its own in this third *status*, for this is the time of the Spirit’s glory. Joachim imagined the Spirit calling out in the verses of Scripture, saying “the Father and the Son have worked until now; and I am at work.”³⁶ But Joachim immediately informed the reader that this does not place the Holy Spirit above the other two parts of the Trinity, but merely exalts each being in its respective *status*.³⁷ As for the end of this *status*, one need only look at the end of the third Circle in the Trinitarian Circles *figura* to notice the words “*finis mundi*,” the end of the world. Thus the third *status* continues from the days of St Benedict until the End, when the apocalyptic cataclysm of God’s divine judgment would be released upon humanity and the world, and Joachim believed himself to be living in this final *status*. Since the third *status* was still evolving and not yet complete, Joachim believed that there were still some facets of the age that were unknowable and unfinished. This vagueness left

open the possibility of various elucidations or even manipulations by later interpreters of his thought, like Dolcino.³⁸

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this third and final state for Joachim, as well as for those like Dolcino who were influenced by his ideas, was the spiritual understanding of history and those to whom it will be imparted. Joachim wrote that the monastic order of the third *status* "will bear fruit in the last times."³⁹ The "fruit" is best understood to be this spiritual understanding of the Testaments and possibly of God as well. In addition, Joachim enigmatically elaborated on those who would bear this "fruit." These are the spiritual men of the last days he referred to when writing: "the letter of the Old Testament was committed to the Jewish people, the letter of the New to the Roman people. The spiritual understanding that proceeds from both [Testaments] has been committed to the spiritual men," who are apparently neither Jews nor Romans.⁴⁰ These holy, spiritual ones have privileged access to the designs of the Divine and, therefore, hold a certain amount of spiritual influence over all the faithful. The arrival of these men and their new understanding, near the End, would be a sign that the age was coming to a close.

To complicate matters, Joachim envisioned not just one, but two groups of spiritual men who will arise chiefly near the end of the age, one of preachers and the other of hermits. He arrived at this division through his exegesis of the Apocalypse. Joachim interpreted the man sitting on a white cloud, who was like the Son of Man (Rev. 14.14) to signify "some order of just men to whom it is given to imitate the life of the Son of Man perfectly . . . and nevertheless to have a tongue learned in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom."⁴¹ The group of hermits is foreseen in the man who went forth from the Temple in heaven with a sharp sickle (Rev. 14.15–16). This man is likened to the angels due to his existence in heaven, that is, higher than the man on the cloud.⁴² Joachim elaborates on these distinctions, stating:

just as in him who was like the Son of Man there is to be understood a future order of perfect men preserving the life of Christ and the apostles, so in the angel who went forth from the Temple in heaven is to be seen an order of hermits imitating the life of the angels.⁴³

Joachim laid the groundwork for a multiplicity of interpretations regarding the "spiritual men" and who they would be. His conception of these men as holy possessors of divinely granted spiritual knowledge, coupled with an attribution of vaguely realized authority, and implications of a key role to be filled at the end of days left a certain amount of leeway for historical defenders of his position. One obvious consequence of claiming this authority would be a challenge to the traditional understanding of Scripture and ecclesiastical authority.

For Joachim, these *status* were a reflection of the divine Trinity created by God. One cannot conceive of the three *status* as individual, separate states. Each *status* does not represent a single age, clearly breaking with the previous one, but rather an interdependent and overlapping system, signified by the interlocking of the circles. As the Trinity cannot be understood solely in its individual parts, so also with the three *status*. Their interrelation, not just of one with the next, but all three with each other, is a reflection of their indivisible nature, a factor either overlooked or intentionally changed by Dolcino, as the last part of this chapter will explain.

Concerning the event of the Apocalypse itself, Joachim saw at the end of the third *status* not merely the consummation of that age, but of the entire physical world. Throughout the Old and New Testaments Joachim discovered prophecies he believed to have been already, or nearly, completed. With the fulfillment of these prophecies, Joachim saw the imminent approach of the Last Days. As he explained, “this will not take place in the days of your grandchildren or in the old age of your children, but in your own days, few and evil.”⁴⁴ Joachim’s quotation at the beginning of this section, regarding his obligation to speak out about God’s coming wrath thus carries an urgency for him; the end is near, and the word has to be spread to those who would listen. According to his understanding, the end was not going to arrive in a single instant; instead Joachim saw the end time as an extended period. He writes that, “the end of the world and the last hour are not always to be taken for the final moment, but for the time of the end.”⁴⁵

Joachim found further parallels regarding the End between the Old and New Testaments. Likening current peoples about to be punished with those who had been punished in the Old Testament, he writes, “The multitude of the Greeks has become Sodom, the Latins have become Gomorrah; with the Greeks publicly proclaiming Egypt’s crime, the Latins Babylon’s disorder.”⁴⁶ The abbot’s identification or paralleling of more recent entities, in this case the Latin and Greek churches, with those of the Old Testament is even more evident with regards to his notion of the seven historical persecutions of the Jews and the seven of the church. He admonished his audience to “remember that the Hebrew people bore seven special persecutions in which, without doubt, the seven special persecutions of the Christians are signified.”⁴⁷ The seventh tribulation of the Old Testament was ended by the first coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ, so after the same number of persecutions, the Judge of the Last Days will return.

The *figura* of the “Great, Red, Seven-headed Dragon” concretely expresses Joachim’s understanding of the end of the world and the concept of an Antichrist.⁴⁸ In this figure, Joachim assigns specific names to each of the heads of the dragon, save the seventh, signifying seven Antichrists. Each head represents a different historical persecutor of the church dating as far back as Herod and the time of Jesus. Important to note is the crown resting atop the dragon’s sixth head and the

name given to it. Joachim labeled this head "Saladin" and the caption reads, "the sixth persecution has begun."⁴⁹ Thus Joachim believed the time of the end to have begun by naming the sixth head Saladin, a contemporary Muslim ruler of most of the Near East near the end of the twelfth century.⁵⁰ Drawing on both the books of Daniel and Revelation, Joachim infuses his text and figure with a sense of a great battle about to take place between the forces of evil and those of Christ.

Joachim's understanding of the Antichrist was as the supreme opponent of God and Christ, the great figure of the end times bent on destroying the church and all its members. Joachim continued with the Apocalyptic concept that the devil and the Antichrist would be allied, writing that "the devil strives for nothing more than to appear like the Most High in every way possible" but in an inverted, perverse, and evil imitation, using "signs and false wonders . . . to seduce even the elect if possible."⁵¹ Joachim's *figura* of the seven-headed dragon quite clearly reveals a joining of the sixth and seventh heads, implying a union of the two evil forces, and Joachim thus foresaw the seventh Antichrist as arising in the same time as that of the sixth.⁵² Following Revelation, Joachim tells of the sixth head coming near death in its battle with the church, but being healed and attacking anew alongside the seventh Antichrist, who was to come "from the West."⁵³ The battle between good and evil finally tilts in favor of Christ, and the sixth and seventh Antichrists will be defeated. However, the multiplicity of Antichrists is meant to point toward the final, ultimate Antichrist to come. This is not the seventh head, but rather the dragon's tail, next to which Joachim wrote: "Gog. He is the final Antichrist."⁵⁴ After these raging battles, "there will be justice on earth and an abundance of peace . . . [and] Jews and many pagans will be converted to the Lord" while the dragon languishes in the abyss.⁵⁵ Joachim did not specify the duration of this period of peace, but noted that at its conclusion would rage the ultimate cosmic battle between Gog, the final Antichrist, and the saved who survived the earlier tribulations.⁵⁶

Joachim introduced another element into his eschatology for this "time of peace," that of a new, holy Pope, come to help save the church in its final conflict with the last Antichrist. Using Rev. 7.2 as support, Joachim writes that "then a new leader will ascend . . . namely a universal pontiff of the New Jerusalem, that is, of the Holy Mother Church."⁵⁷ Joachim did not mean this new, holy Pope as replacement for an evil, corrupt church, but rather as a savior of the church in the Last Battle when the dragon was to be released from the abyss. Although Joachim himself never used the term "angelic pope," later apocalyptic theology surrounding the advent of such a figure, including Dolcino's, appears to have been directly influenced by Joachim's vision of the future.⁵⁸ Taking the papacy as the locus of authority in the church, the belief developed among various writers, including Roger Bacon and Dolcino himself, of a holy pope who would assist or even purify the church in the final days.⁵⁹ As we will see below, the significant difference

between Joachim's and Dolcino's use of the concept of a "holy" pontiff, lies in Dolcino's addition of a wicked pope who will aid and abet the Antichrist.⁶⁰

This final Antichrist, Gog, is symbolized by the dragon's tail and will come as the final persecutor of the church. Gog has the same attribute of the preceding Antichrists, that is, complete and utter opposition to Christ and His elect. With the Holy Pope on their side, the Christians will fight against the armies of the Antichrist and eventually prevail, whereupon Gog and his minions, following John's Apocalypse, will be judged and thrown into the Lake of Fire.⁶¹ This victory ends the persecution of the church and corresponds to the end of Joachim's third and final *status*. In keeping with the spiritual essence of this third *status* and its emphasis on a movement from the flesh and toward the spirit, Joachim imagined that the earthly world would be destroyed and left behind. All that remains is the hoped-for spiritual perfection and existence, a time of unprecedented peace and tranquility.⁶²

The concept of a "Holy Pope," without any reference to a corrupted, evil pope, suggests that Joachim did not see himself as an opponent of the church of his day. In fact, during his lifetime, Joachim was by no means considered a heretic. It is true that after Joachim's death, the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 did condemn some of his ideas criticizing elements of the Trinitarian doctrine of Peter Lombard, but Joachim himself was not labeled a heretic.⁶³ In fact, the majority of Joachim's works were written with the consent and under the authority of not just one pope, but three (Clement III, Lucius III, and Urban III) showing a long tradition of papal acceptance.⁶⁴ This acceptance was reciprocal, for in no way did Joachim attempt to attack, subvert, or even differ with the church's opinion and authority. Fearing that he might perhaps die before the ambiguity of some of his visions could be explained, and wanting to ensure that his works were entirely orthodox, Joachim wrote,

It may happen that I should die before I would be able to present them to the Apostolic See in conformity with the commands I have received. I undertook these compositions on the condition that my labor be his and his teaching authority be in them in every way. . . . I have always been prepared to hold what it [the Church] commanded or will command. I would defend no view of mine against its holy faith, fully believing what it believes, receiving its correction in morals as well as in doctrine, rejecting whom it rejects, accepting whom it accepts.⁶⁵

Joachim always attempted to present his works to papal scrutiny for correction in the hope of having any errors rectified so as not to proclaim false doctrine. Thus, Joachim was very much concerned with his portrayal of the church, its leaders, and its doctrines, attempting to make his ideas acceptable. There exist no strains of anticlericalism in his works, nor objections to the church, for Joachim believed

himself to be a devout Christian, respectful toward God's Church and its holy authority.

The Roman Church plays a very central role in Joachim's understanding of history, particularly during the third *status*. Scholars have debated the orthodoxy of Joachim and his view of the church, but in recent years it appears that the consensus is in favor of Joachim's unwavering adherence and fidelity to the Roman Church as the rightful institution of the final *status*.⁶⁶ Joachim did not see the church, its clergy, or its sacraments as corrupt, nor did he look forward to the end of the institutional church in the coming spiritual age.⁶⁷ Of course, he did predict a transformation in the whole of the Christian body as the third age dawned, yet such a transformation would not be from a corrupt church to a pure church, but rather from a pure church to a purer church. The church of the second *status* would undergo a transformation into an even higher glory but it would still be, unmistakably, the Roman Church. As Bernard McGinn has noted, the institutions and values of the church of the third *status* "were not to be new creations, but completions of what had already been initiated in the first and second *status*."⁶⁸ Indeed, Joachim's theology was one of progress, of continual advancement toward perfection. The Roman Church, complete with papacy and sacraments, would be the locus of this transformation.

Joachim did write in terms of the church of Peter (second *status*) and the church of John (third *status*), but as Marjorie Reeves points out, "these contrasts are qualitative, not institutional."⁶⁹ The latter is not intended to supercede the former, but rather to further the church along on its road to perfection. The pontiff himself, according to Joachim, will be the great champion of the coming tribulations, the central focus of the church's renewal.⁷⁰ Emphasizing this focus and the centrality of the church in the last days, Reeves explains that Joachim's third *status* is characterized not only by spiritual understanding and liberty but also by ecumenicism.⁷¹ In many of his works, Joachim points to the return of the Greek Church to its true and proper obedience to the Roman Church, as well as the conversion of the Jews. All this serves to highlight the centrality of the church, as well as Joachim's deep and abiding orthodox loyalty to it. Without a doubt, according to Joachim, the Roman Church is the right and proper institutional authority of the last age.⁷²

Despite the many direct statements Joachim made regarding the unshakable centrality and holiness of the Roman Church, like many prophets, he was often unclear and ambiguous in other contexts. For example, Joachim often spoke of a decline of virtue toward the end of each *status*, yet he is never explicit as to what sort of decline is expected; the reader never quite knows who would be susceptible to such a decline, how long it would last, or its extent. Does such a decline in virtue implicate the whole church, or merely some of its members? Such ambiguity easily leaves the door open for others to interpret his predictions in accordance

with their own anticlerical agendas, but in no way should this implicate Joachim in the same charges. As Marjorie Reeves explains, “in intention and in the broad outline of his conception, Joachim was faithful to the orthodoxy of the Latin Church as he understood it.”⁷³

DOLCINO’S APOCALYPTIC HISTORY

Joachim’s conception of the apocalyptic end of human history, though orthodox, contained ambiguous elements that allowed his intellectual descendants, such as Dolcino, to reinterpret his visions to suit their own, often heretical, ends. Dolcino himself believed that Segarelli’s Apostles were the spiritual men of the end times spoken of by Joachim, and not the Franciscans or Dominicans who had already, themselves, laid claim to that title.⁷⁴ After taking charge of the Order after the execution of Segarelli, Dolcino believed that God had specially commissioned the Apostles, claiming that “in the last days God had sent and selected this congregation for the salvation of souls, and that God has sent and chosen the one who was the head of this congregation,” that is, Dolcino himself.⁷⁵ By identifying himself as the divinely appointed head of this congregation, Dolcino firmly established himself and his followers as key players in the apocalyptic end times.

Like Joachim before him, Dolcino believed that God had graced him with divine revelations about history “so that he could explain the prophecies and understand the passages of the Old and New Testaments about the last days.”⁷⁶ Dolcino believed, again like Joachim, that a new, moral, and apostolic way of life was the cornerstone of the new spiritual men of the last days. Dolcino’s innovation, in part, lay in his claim that this mode of living had been established by Gerard Segarelli, to whom he attributed Christ-like qualities, even going so far as to claim that Gerard was “an offshoot of God, springing from the root of faith.”⁷⁷ Dolcino believed that Segarelli had created a path meant to lead God’s people back to a state of perfection symbolized by the poverty of the early church, speaking of him as a part of God who brought about a change to a new, moral life. Add to this the apocalyptic nature of Dolcino’s beliefs, and Segarelli also appears as an initiator of the end times. Dolcino saw Segarelli, and hence the Apostles, as the founder of the final Joachite state of perfection, one that came about in direct relation to the End of the World.⁷⁸

Derived from and influenced by Joachim’s apocalyptic schemes, Dolcino’s conception of history shares many similarities with the Calabrian’s, most notably in Dolcino’s division of history into a series of *status*. Dolcino also believed that his Apostles, whose lifestyle signified a final mode of perfection, had been chosen and sent by God in the last days. The Order of Apostles therefore represented Joachim’s monks of the third epoch. Dolcino saw this spiritual mode of life best

expressed by apostolic poverty and holiness. As both participants and representatives of this spiritual nature, members of the Order were unconnected to things of an earthly or fleshy nature, which Dolcino ultimately came to identify with the "corrupt" Roman Church. This apostolic spirituality helps to explain the Order's ongoing refusal to submit to papal authority, as members gradually came to consider themselves spiritually perfect and representatives of an age in which clerical leadership had been superseded.⁷⁹

Though advocating a return to the poor and communal lifestyle of the ancient apostles, Dolcino also combined these sentiments with his unique apocalyptic theology, taking the concept of apostolic poverty in a new direction. The Order's ideology was not simply a return to an apostolic model, but also a clear sign of their significant role in apocalyptic time. Marjorie Reeves has noted that, under Dolcino, the Apostles believed that "their order was to be the culminating point of history rather than its return to a primitive purity."⁸⁰ This distinction is noteworthy in that it clearly separates the ideas of Dolcino from those other poverty heretics, such as the Waldensians, but also highlights Dolcino's radical transformation of Segarelli's earlier apostolicism. When these groups viewed themselves exclusively in terms of their adherence to the biblical standard of apostolic poverty, then it would follow that they perceived themselves as looking back to the glory of the primitive church. With the addition of apocalyptic elements, this perspective changed from looking back to looking ahead, and the state of apostolic poverty then became the final development on the road to spiritual perfection. This change accounts for the shift from apostolic to apocalyptic poverty.

Although influenced by Joachim's conception of history, Dolcino's historical model conspicuously lacks a relationship between the Trinity and history, a crucial and fundamental aspect of Joachim's apocalypticism. Instead, Dolcino focuses on a series of fours and their representation in history. Using the same terminology as Joachim, Dolcino imagined four *status* of history that he then ascribed to various holy men. As in Joachim, a certain mode of living distinguishes each *status*.⁸¹ The first *status* is that of the Fathers of the Old Testament up to the time of Christ. Following Joachim, Dolcino ascribes this *status* to marriage and reproduction.⁸² He also perceived a gradual decline in the "perfection" of this and the next two *status*, in that each *status* starts out in perfection but gradually declines in grace until it is succeeded by another, purer *status*.⁸³ The decline of each of the *status* is rectified by the arrival of a savior figure who promoted evangelical poverty and ushered in the next *status*. In the case of the first *status*, this figure was Christ and His Apostles, while each of the next three *status* were initiated by Benedict, Francis and Dominic, and Gerard Segarelli respectively.⁸⁴

The second *status*, begun by Christ, was marked by a true faith, exhibited through miracles, poverty, chastity, and other *exempla* of good life.⁸⁵ Virginity and chastity in this *status* were ideals held higher than marriage was in the first.

Likewise, Dolcino placed poverty above wealth, and considered a life without material riches better than one with possessions. This *status* can be likened to Joachim's second *status* where the celibacy of the clergy is seen to have superseded the marriage characteristic of the first. However, gradual deviance from Christ's message resulted in a moral and spiritual decline that led to the dawn of the next *status*.

The third *status* began with Pope Silvester I (d. 335), yet Dolcino noted that wealth and material possession were acceptable during this time so long as they did not pull one away from God. When this movement away from God did begin, the life of withdrawal denoted by St Benedict was to be preferred due to its further removal from wealth and the world.⁸⁶ Thus, to this *status* was applied, at least near its end, the life and way of the monks. This application of monasticism, again, is a direct correlation to Joachim's third *status*, save for this idea about the modes of life switching partway through the *status*. The decline caused by materialism signified the end of the third *status* that was renewed into a fourth *status* and initiated by the apostolic ideals of Francis and Dominic.

The very existence of a fourth *status* represents a marked departure from Joachim's trinitarian vision of history. This final *status* is identified with the apostolic way of life, stricter than that of the monks with regards to housing and money. Dolcino believed, like other poverty heretics, that the possession of houses by monks was incompatible with true poverty, where one was to have neither possessions nor permanent dwelling.⁸⁷ Despite his break from Joachim's use of threes, this final *status* is similar to the last of Joachim's *status* in that it was seen as a final state of perfection, where one is completely divorced from the material world and instead lived spiritually. Two major differences, however, emerge. First, the concept of a fourth *status* in itself contradicts Joachim's trinitarian conception of history. Infused as he may have been with the abbot's ideas, Dolcino relied on a series of fours, not threes, thus neglecting the trinitarian view altogether. Although his *status* share similar modes of living with those of Joachim, the absence of the Trinity creates Dolcino's unique form of historical thought. The second distinction is Dolcino's idea of clearly definable breaks between *status*. Dolcino clearly imagined a rigid division between each *status*, reinforcing their separateness, and thus he distanced himself further from the interconnectedness of a trinitarian model.

Dolcino used fours as well in his understanding the history of the church. He conceived of four developments of the church, beginning with Christ and continuing until the End. The first development, which lasted until the time of St Silvester, saw the church as "good, virginal, chaste, and suffering persecutions."⁸⁸ In the second development, the church came to be rich and honored, while at the same time maintaining its chastity and goodness. The third stage saw the church as evil, rich, and honored, a condition that Dolcino believed existed during his own life.

This age was to continue until that time when all the evil, wicked members of the church (its clergy, monks, and religious) would be savagely exterminated, most likely by the Last World Emperor.⁸⁹ Though the explicit violence of his vision cannot be denied, Dolcino never claimed in any of his three letters that his Apostles would have a direct hand in the actual liquidation of the corrupt ecclesiastics.

Dolcino saw many evils arising from this third *status*, singling out Pope Boniface VIII for his alleged avarice and abuse of spiritual authority.⁹⁰ The fourth and final development of the church, initiated by Gerard Segarelli, was to be “good, poor, and reformed according to his apostolic way of life.”⁹¹ This final *status* was to continue until the end of time, bearing fruit in the last days. Here we can see Dolcino drawing upon the ideas of Joachim and his “spiritual men” of the last days. Dolcino thus assimilated his Apostles to the spiritual men spoken of by Joachim, endowing them with all the perfected spiritual qualities noted by Joachim. This gave them their divine appointment as well as their spiritual understanding of time and of God that was the special trademark of Joachim’s spiritual men.

In addition to his major break with Joachim’s Trinitarian form of history, Dolcino viewed the church as evil. Such a concept is not only utterly alien to Joachim’s ideas, but would have horrified the abbot. Joachim’s testament revealed his constant seeking of papal approval in all the various aspects of his works. Although Joachim ardently upheld the faith of the institutional church, Dolcino saw it as wicked and corrupt.

Joachim and Dolcino both relied on the Revelation of John, but Dolcino broke seriously with Joachim’s theories on the end of the world. Perhaps most important in this regard is Dolcino’s concept of a Last World Emperor, something Joachim never mentioned or even hinted at. Dolcino believed that at the End there would come a Holy Emperor who would fight for the just and holy, that is, Dolcino’s Apostles. Moreover, Dolcino did not view this Emperor as someone in the far distant future, but specifically identified him with a man living at the time. Dolcino believed that this Emperor “was Frederick, then King of Sicily, the son of the late King Peter [III] of Aragon. Frederick would be established as Emperor and would make new kings.”⁹² That identification placed the time of the Emperor specifically during Dolcino’s own life.

This Emperor would play an important role in the Last Days. He would rise up against the evil Church and purge it. According to Dolcino, the Emperor “would invade and seize Pope Boniface and have him killed along with many others.”⁹³ Those groups Dolcino had identified with his third *status* of the church, that is, the wicked clergy and prelates, would be “killed and wiped off the face of the earth by a Divine Sword that would be wielded by [this] established Emperor.”⁹⁴ The inherent violence of these apocalyptic schemes, in no way unique to the Apostles, was still not a call for Dolcino’s followers to take up arms against the church, but

rather a prophecy of the Order's vindication, and the church's comeuppance, at the hands of the Last World Emperor. Dolcino's vision thus endows the Emperor with messianic qualities, much like those who inaugurated each *status*, for it is this very Emperor who ushers in the last and final development of the church. As with all "saviors," there is a divine element associated with the Holy Emperor, as he appears to be chosen and sent by God for carrying out His plans. After cleansing the church of its evil elements, the Emperor Frederick would then govern the entire world better and more completely than had yet been done, and his reign was to last until the time of the Antichrist.⁹⁵

Dolcino was not entirely innovative in his belief in a Last World Emperor. In fact, the concept of such an Emperor, whether good or evil, had existed for some time. The earliest surviving account of the legend of a Last World Emperor is found in Pseudo-Methodius' *Revelations*, an Eastern Christian tract written sometime between 660 and 680 CE. The *Revelations* reveal a coming Emperor who, it was prophesied, would defeat the Islamic armies of the East and restore Christianity to its former, widespread glory.⁹⁶ Bernard McGinn notes a significant reversal in this text from earlier apocalyptic literature. He writes that the vision of the text "not only gave hope for the future but . . . it at least implicitly encouraged active resistance against the forces of evil."⁹⁷ This text not only identifies each evil with specific historical actors but it also insisted that a suffering Christian no longer had to passively accept persecution and tribulation, but instead could and should actively resist evil. This change to active involvement was a significant departure from the earlier, ancient Christian ideal of passive martyrdom, and gained favor especially among Dolcino and his followers.

It is important to note that Dolcino predicted only one Antichrist. This is unlike Joachim's vision of the End where a series of Antichrists pave the way for Gog, the final Antichrist. Although greatly at odds with the church, Dolcino identifies neither the institution nor the popes with the Antichrist, even though he sees them as evil. Perhaps the perceived evil of their lives is a general link between the popes and the Antichrist, but the succession of popes is not interpreted as a series of lesser Antichrists, like the heads of Joachim's Dragon *figura*.

Using his pattern of fours, Dolcino devised a scheme that demonstrated the nature of the final four popes. Though he considered virtually the whole of the church, especially its prelates and priests, as evil, Dolcino nevertheless foresaw two good popes, the first and the last, and two evil popes, the second and the third. The first pope was Celestine V, but right after him came the "evil" Boniface VIII. Boniface's successor, unnamed in the text, was the evil third of four popes.⁹⁸ This ordering of the four final popes of the church arose from Dolcino's belief that the End was rapidly approaching. Here, as elsewhere, Dolcino insists that all these events will start to unravel beginning in the year 1303 and culminate in the 2 years from 1304 to 1305.⁹⁹

There was still the fourth and final pope who was to be good and holy. Here is a parallel with Joachim: the notion of a Holy Pope coming in the Last Days to aid the church in its struggle. The difference between the two men's interpretations lies in the function of this Holy Pope and his relation to the church. For Joachim, the pope would be sent to aid the church by fighting alongside it against the Antichrist. For Dolcino, the Holy Pope would aid the church by targeting its internal evil, establishing it anew. Dolcino believed this pope would be miraculously sent by God and not chosen by the "evil" cardinals, for they will have been exterminated by the Emperor.¹⁰⁰ He believed the Emperor and the Holy Pope would rule together until the time of the Antichrist and the Final Battle.¹⁰¹ It is due to the arrival of both the Emperor and the Holy Pope that a profound change comes over this fourth state of human history. Like Joachim before him, Dolcino assigns a certain holiness to the last *status*, by infusing it with the essence of the Holy Spirit. The exceptional nature given to this last *status*, common to both systems, is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the spiritual men, an outpouring marked by grace and understanding of the Divine.¹⁰² At the end of this *status*, the defeat of Antichrist by the Emperor, the Holy Pope, and the spiritual men will renew the church.¹⁰³ Thus, the glorious End of the world will be complete.

Perhaps the appeal of apocalyptic thought lies in its message of renewal and rebirth. The notion that an unjust and corrupt world will pass away and that a new, purer order will be established appears to have resonated, not only among the immediate followers of Dolcino but also among those to whom Joachim's ideas appealed. The differences between the apocalyptic thought of Joachim and Dolcino lie primarily in their acceptance or marginalization by the ecclesiastical authorities. Joachim did not sound a universal call to arms against a corrupt church, for it was that very church that supported him. Dolcino, on the other hand, actively chose to associate with a marginalized group from the beginning and his apocalypticism progressed from there. Fra Dolcino's understanding of the last days furthermore called for his group's active involvement in the coming cataclysm, even if only to serve as harbingers of the Last Age and living examples of the *vita apostolica*. It was, nevertheless, a call to side with the Last World Emperor against the corrupt and wicked who had infested the church. There is, however, no mistaking the obviously violent implications of Dolcino's apocalypticism and, though he may have envisioned violence carried out only by the Emperor, one cannot overlook the fact that Dolcino's audience, especially the restless Valsesians, might not have noticed such subtleties or might have deliberately ignored them, bending Dolcino's religious ideas to their own, socially motivated cause.

This violence, together with Dolcino's reimagining of the apocalyptic roles played by historical actors, is perhaps the most significant distinction between his vision of the End and that of Joachim. For Joachim, reform of the church would come almost exclusively from within, in the form of the Angelic Pastor and the

Spiritual Men. Their opponents would come from the outside, in the form of successive Antichrists and their minions. Dolcino, however, saw the purifying forces coming from outside the church, in the form of the Last World Emperor and the remnant of the pure, Spiritual Men, his own Apostles. In Dolcino's thought, the Antichrist would come from *within* the church.

CONCLUSION

Under Gerard Segarelli, the Order of Apostles concerned themselves primarily with personal notions of poverty and penance, a return to the simpler life of the apostles and Christ, and a life without attachments or belongings. Other than the Order's origin in the year 1260, which, perhaps coincidentally, was the same year that Gerardo of Borgo San Donnino claimed that Joachim's third and last *status* would begin, Segarelli showed no signs of apocalyptic thought. After his execution, and under the new leadership of Dolcino, the tone of the Apostles' message changed as Dolcino radically altered Segarelli's concept of the *vita apostolica*. Dolcino's innovation was to associate a Joachimite apocalypticism with evangelical poverty, a change that meant that the Order's apostolic perfection, and subsequent persecution by the seemingly wicked, corrupt, and materialistic church, signified the beginning of the End. As a result, the Order became increasingly, urgently apocalyptic and ultimately embraced violence as a final desperate measure to ensure its survival against the powerful servants of Antichrist. This change is a significant departure from earlier apocalyptic ideas for, as Bernard McGinn has observed, prior to the thirteenth century these ideas functioned more as a "critique of the *status quo*," and the intent was not "active opposition" but "passive endurance, awaiting the action of God who alone had the power to defeat the forces of evil."¹⁰⁴

For Dolcino and the Order of Apostles, apocalypticism served as a means of validating the group's existence, for what better way to gain support for a marginalized movement than to appeal to widely accepted prophecies promoting a new group of sanctified spirituals? As McGinn claims, validation from the future was powerfully appealing to the Apostles, who turned to "apocalyptic thought and millenarian ideas to achieve their sense of identity," so that apocalypticism both helped to identify and justify the Order's existence and struggle.¹⁰⁵ Modern analyses aside, the apocalyptic views of the Apostles were more than mere validation of a group's identity; their beliefs and actions *were* their identity. It was Dolcino's fervent belief in the coming cataclysm and the Order's role in it that drove the group into the mountains, spurred them on in their resistance to papal and feudal forces, and ultimately consumed them in the flames of heresy.

In the Valley of Heresy

When Dolcino and his followers fled the area around Cimego and headed west in 1304 to avoid the reach of inquisitors, they chose as their destination the mountainous Sesia river valley about 50 miles northwest of Milan and, according to one biographer, also Dolcino's likely birthplace. Dolcino's familiarity with the area known as Valsesia would also have made him privy to its long history of popular uprisings against both feudal and communal forces. Indeed, the Apostles received aid and comfort in the region from several different individuals and groups. More importantly, the Apostles also received armed support, which was sorely needed once the wrath of episcopal armies descended upon the heretics and their supporters. The reason for this perhaps not-unexpected assistance can be found in both the geography of Valsesia and its political and economic environment, which were intricately connected. On the one hand, Dolcino's message of apostolic poverty resonated with many of the farmers and villagers, especially in the more remote areas of Valsesia, precisely because they themselves were already poor and thus that much closer to the ideal he preached. On the other hand, the Valsesians, both rich and poor, found Dolcino's sentiment about the worldly corruption, greed, and arrogance of the church and their supporters appealing because they believed that they were witnessing it firsthand.

GEOGRAPHY OF VALSESIA

The political situation in the Sesia river valley was far more complex than its more urban and communal counterparts of Parma, Rome, Milan, Pavia, and Alessandria. Whereas many of the major urban centers, such as Milan, were made up of the city proper and its rural *contado*, the supporting countryside, Valsesia in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was a mix of a few large communes (Vercelli and Novara), a series of fortified towns (Gattinara, Serravalle, Robiallo) under the control of the rural nobility, the Biandrate, and an isolated group of villages nestled deep in the steep valleys and often difficult to reach and communicate with. Unlike their communal neighbors that were situated on the wide and flat Lombard plain and could thus easily interact with their *contado*,

the cities of Vercelli and Novara controlled both areas in the plain and also those in the high mountains to the north. As we shall see, the remoteness of many of the areas technically under their control often allowed for the development of a stronger sense of independence for the villages and communities of the valleys.

The geography of Valsesia is a study in dualities. To this day, the region is divided into two main parts, High (Alta) Valsesia and Low (Bassa) Valsesia and these divisions are a function of the landscape itself. Most of the major cities, such as Vercelli and Novara, and even the chief city of the counts of Biandrate (named, naturally, Biandrate) are all located in lower Valsesia in the wide open spaces of the Lombard plain. Here one finds all the major roads linking the Lombard cities with easy access to and from cities like Milan to the east, the bustling port of Genoa to the south, the imperial city of Pavia and beyond, and the via Emilia in the southeast. Vercelli was also a major stopping point for trade going over the St Bernard Pass, past Lake Geneva into France and it also had easy access to Lake Como and the Septimer Pass into Germany. Thus Vercelli, and its neighbor and rival, Novara, were well-integrated into the fabric of economic and political life throughout the Lombard plain.

On the other hand, Alta Valsesia was, and remains, a world apart from the bustling locales downstream. Traveling north, not far past Vercelli, beginning around Gattinara, the open plain gives way to slowly rising foothills and the beginnings of the valley. A few miles further lies the town of Borgosesia, just above the confluence of the Sessera and Sesia rivers and here the valley begins to close in and starts to narrow. Past this point, the flatlands to the south can no longer be seen and the view is steep mountains to the west with smaller, though no less formidable mountains to the east. Not much further past Borgosesia, the river makes a sharp bend to the west and the valley begins to narrow considerably. It is here that the small town of Varallo is located, which serves as the effective delineation of the two regions and is a good 40 miles or more north of Vercelli. In the Middle Ages, as now, Varallo was the last major town on the river after which all the locales were small villages and settlements. These communities, many of which were nestled right along the banks of the Sesia, numbered perhaps 30 in 1217, while the entire population of Valsesia (Alta and Bassa) was roughly 5,000, most of whom lived much further down toward Vercelli.¹

The villages of Alta Valsesia existed in marked contrast to the cities down river. The economy of the villages was simple rural agriculture and animal husbandry. In the summers, flocks and herds were allowed to graze in the verdant alpine pastures, then brought back down to the villages during the harsh winters. Some of the only interaction between those living in Alta Valsesia and those living in Bassa Valsesia occurred when the villagers came down the mountains to Varallo for its market. But even here, their economic motives differed from those of their

slightly more urbanized neighbors. Unlike most markets, where the majority of people came to purchase goods, when the Valsesians journeyed to the market in Varallo they mainly sold goods, generally to have coin in hand for later taxes, feudal dues, and tithes. If any purchases were made they mostly consisted of tools.² Thus the products and wares of the typical medieval market were of little use to Valsesians.

Part of the reason for this atypical participation in the market can be traced to the relative poverty of the inhabitants of Valsesia, at least when compared to the inhabitants of cities like Vercelli and Novara.³ While it is true that they did not have even modest amounts of wealth, either in moveable goods or in coin, such markers of wealth and poverty were mostly irrelevant in the alpine valleys since the Valsesians had access to many opportunities not available to their more urbanized counterparts. Unlike inhabitants of the cities, who had little access to food and clothing outside of the markets, or even those in rural areas of lower Valsesia who perhaps lived near woods and streams but could not hunt or fish there because of enclosures or prohibition, the inhabitants of far upper Valsesia had virtually everything they needed for sustenance. They had immediate access to pastures, forests, and streams, and could hunt, fish, and even collect firewood without regard to the feudal regulations that generally hampered such activity elsewhere since their feudal overlords were far downstream in the plain. Even if the nobles had been in close proximity, the isolated nature of many of the smaller valleys and tributaries made them impossible to police.⁴

Another important aspect of Valsesian daily life, and one that would benefit Dolcino and the Apostles upon their arrival, was the communal and collective nature of village lifestyle. Although villagers working together, whether it be in the mill or in the fields, was not unique to Valsesia, the relative isolation of these alpine villages meant that the inhabitants of these communities were much more tightly bound together.⁵ The structure of village life in Valsesia was by default a communal system of interdependence in order to survive, especially during the harsh winters. Whether it be the village oven for baking bread or the shared pens for livestock, the Valsesians had a shared interest in working together, particularly since there was no immediate lord to protect or shelter them. Their isolation, coupled with the seasonally harsh climate, necessitated a close bond between villagers that helped form their distinct local identity that had independence at its core. This attitude is consistent with the findings of Georges Duby, who argued that in terms of the general medieval peasant economy, "As a matter of principle the free inhabitants felt themselves allied in the face of the public power" such as that of kings and nobles.⁶ Thus when the Apostles arrived and settled in upper Valsesia, they found themselves among villagers whose identity, like their own, was poor, communal, and independent.

VALSESIAN POLITICS AND AUTONOMY

The other factor that had such an impact on the development of Valsesia as a receptive locale for Dolcino and his followers was the unique, and highly tumultuous, political situation of the region. From the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries the three main powers of the region were the rural nobility, the counts of Biandrate, and the communes of Vercelli and Novara. At various points throughout this period, these three groups squared off against one another, fighting over issues like feudal dues and rights, communal privileges, and especially access to and control over the lucrative territory of Valsesia. In some instances, alliances were created, such as a pact between the Biandrate and Vercelli against the interests of Novara, and usually at the expense of the Valsesians.

The Biandrate were a powerful family that controlled vast stretches of territory in the Lombard plain, including for some time the cities of Vercelli and Novara, as well as the Sesia valley, as far back as the early eleventh century.⁷ Based out of their eponymous town of Biandrate, which lay between and just north of Novara and Vercelli, the counts spread their reach out to places like Canavese, Montferrat, Val d'Ossala, and Valais. The vast amount of their holdings were in the northern part of the diocese of Novara, between the Sesia river to the west and the Ticino river to the east, and extending northward into the moderately mountainous terrain between the lakes Orta and Maggiore. At various times from the mid-eleventh century through the thirteenth century, they possessed in this region approximately 46 separate holdings, which ranged from large towns to small villages.⁸ The main source of Biandrate power in this territory was their castles, which they used both as a means to dominate the region and as secure places to retreat to in times of crisis. In Valsesia, the Biandrate controlled over 30 locales, the majority of which were downriver from Varallo. The notable exceptions in Alta Valsesia were the small villages of Rossa, Scopa, and Scopello.⁹ Beyond these little communities and deeper into the mountains, the holdings of the Biandrate were simply referred to by their alpine region (Alpe Lavazei, Alpe Bors, Alpe Otro, Alpe Rimella), which indicates both the lack of population and development as well as their remoteness.

The Biandrate's power can be traced, in part, to the family's long-standing alliances with the various German emperors who frequently, though ultimately ineffectively, tried to exert control over Lombardy and its riches. In most cases, these imperial alliances benefitted the Biandrate by either granting them feudal rights in their territories or reaffirming rights previously granted. For example, in 1140–1, Emperor Conrad III confirmed for the Biandrate family all of their feudal possessions throughout both the plain and the valleys, with all the rights and privileges that they traditionally held over their lands and, tellingly, no archbishop, bishop, duke, count or anyone, rich or poor, could usurp such rights.¹⁰

A decade later, the Biandrate again allied with the emperor, now Frederick I, who reconfirmed all their feudal and allodial possessions, such as castles, villages, chapels, fields, vineyards, even houses, jurisdictions, and taxation privileges, granted by all prior emperors.¹¹ These imperial privileges vastly increased the holdings and power of the Biandrate throughout the region, granting them access to much-desired dues and taxes. But it also had the effect of angering many of their subjects, such as the Valsesians, who saw it as an oppressive imposition and especially the communes of Novara and Vercelli, who jealously yearned to possess such rights themselves.

While this imperial-noble alliance worked well for the Biandrate for many decades, they made a grave mistake in allying with Frederick Barbarossa against the united communes of the Lombard League. After the humiliating defeat at Legnano, Frederick's Italian allies were dealt with harshly. In 1170, the commune of Vercelli struck an agreement with the Biandrate that limited the control they exerted via their castles, forcing them to cede many of their feudal rights in the plain to the commune. Additionally, the Biandrate were not allowed to take over any fortifications or towers without the express approval of Vercelli, particularly those in the vicinity of the city itself.¹² The gains made by the commune of Vercelli are notable not simply because they resulted from a poorly executed battle plan of Frederick, but also because they speak to the rising power and influence of the communes throughout Lombardy.¹³ The nobility like the Biandrate derived their income and power, in part, from the rural economy they controlled while the communes, although they did exert influence over the contado, saw much more of their wealth derived from the emergence of the new commercial economy.

The warfare that took place between the Biandrate and Vercelli at the Battle of Legnano continued on and off for the next few decades, culminating in an accord between the two in 1217 that divided up their spheres of influence, particularly with respect to control over Valsesia. Rather than completely destroy the Biandrate, the leaders of the commune of Vercelli saw a distinct advantage to alliance, which allowed them to use the counts, especially their castles and their manpower, as an extension of their own forces. Not doing so would have meant that the commune would have to use its own men and resources to control the vast territories already held by the counts. For the most part, the agreement was very favorable to the Biandrate but, of course, most of the stipulations benefited Vercelli. Like the emperors before, the commune granted the Biandrate inheritable rights to their territories, with the sole condition being that they had to swear fealty to Vercelli. The counts, Gozio, Ottone, and Opizone, had to cede their castles to the city, but were immediately reinvested with the very same castles by Uberto d'Ossola, the podestà of Vercelli, a clear example of the commune's superior position.¹⁴

Another important feudal right that the Biandrate had to relinquish to the commune was the privilege of collecting from the inhabitants of Valsesia the *fodro*, direct taxation originally meant to provide fodder for the lord's horses, as well as monetary payments in the sum of 1,000 Pavese lire and military services in times of war.¹⁵ The counts also had to swear their Valsesian subjects over to the Vercellese and assist the commune during war, while in return the podestà promised communal support in defending the counts against their enemies.¹⁶ The irony, of course, is that such feudal obligations were the very thing that communes such as Vercelli had themselves revolted against under episcopal rule, yet they had no problem imposing such measures on their less urbanized counterparts in the countryside. Moreover, while all these measures clearly indicate Vercelli's ultimate jurisdiction over Valsesia, their supremacy over the region was obviously dependent on the Biandrate. Of equal importance is the fact that this accord explicitly acknowledges that the ultimate subjects of the agreement, the Valsesians, would likely protest this extension of lordship over them.

In fact the accord led to an immediate outbreak of rebellion as the Valsesians attempted to proclaim their autonomy but also involved the Biandrate in war with neighboring Novara. Although the revolt of 1217 was successfully put down by this new alliance of counts and commune, nevertheless it began a near-continuous series of rebellions that would last for over a half-century.¹⁷ The tumult continued when, shortly thereafter, Vercelli and Novara went to war with each other, dragging the Biandrate into the fray. The convoluted nature of alliances in this war are indicative of the volatile political forces at work in northern Italy, as when in November 1218 a legate for Pope Honorius III went to the powerful city of Milan requesting that the commune absolutely not intervene in Valsesia to help the Novarese in their fight with Vercelli and the Biandrate. Even the bishop of Torino, who was also the vicar of Emperor Frederick, stepped in to uphold the empire's long-standing relationship with the counts by warning Milan to not intervene in the conflict.¹⁸ Despite being stymied in their attempts to secure aid from Milan, Novara was nonetheless victorious and the Biandrate, as vassals of the defeated Vercelli, were temporarily put under the control of Novara. As part of the terms, the Biandrate were prohibited from undertaking any military action to stabilize their territories, especially Valsesia, without express permission from the commune of Novara. This situation would change dramatically again in the intervening years, so that by 1247 Vercelli and the Biandrate had wrested control of many of their territories back from Novara and once again created a series of treaties stipulating their rights and spheres of influence with respect to Valsesia. Indeed, the fortunes of Vercelli had risen sufficiently since their earlier defeat that the commune's ambassadors could openly demand that Novara refrain from undertaking any action, military or otherwise, that would infringe on the pact between Vercelli and the Biandrate regarding Valsesia.¹⁹ Despite this warning

and considering the ill will between these competing communes, if Novara found any opportunity to undermine either Vercelli or the Biandrate, they would seize upon it. And they did.

Between 1247 and 1254, Novara allied with the rebellious towns and villages of Valsesia in their push for independence from feudal control. After decades of on-again, off-again sedition, the Valsesians were slowly coalescing into a formidable opponent and the assistance of Novara was welcome indeed. This alliance between the two effectively destabilized Vercelli by opening up a two-front conflict and temporarily helped push the rural nobility, the Biandrate, from power long enough for the Valsesians to consolidate their gains. Like the communal rebellions of the Italian cities before them, the Valsesians realized that there was strength in both numbers and solidarity and when they openly rebelled against the renewed feudal obligations imposed on them in 1247, they declared themselves a *universitas*, a collective. Another factor in Valsesia's ascendancy was its very geography: because many of these communities (some of them barely even villages) were located deep in the mountains, the Biandrate had a difficult time flexing their feudal muscle, particularly when most of their resources were being mobilized to aid their allies in Vercelli and the majority of the conflicts took place in the Lombard plain and lower Valsesia.²⁰

Unfortunately for the Valsesians, their alliance with the Novarese was only temporary, as a peace was concluded between the former rival cities beginning in 1254. One aspect of this peace was that the Novarese renounced their support of the rebellious Valsesians and instead backed the Biandrate, which meant that the two cities and the feudal lords were now aligned to exert extensive control over the mountain villages. In fact, the communes of both Novara and Vercelli sought to use the Biandrate to keep the Valsesians in check and hinder their efforts at securing autonomy. Thus in August of 1260, the commune of Vercelli and the counts of Biandrate signed yet another pact that increased their control over Valsesia through measures that were particularly onerous. The pact allowed the Biandrate to nominate a podestà to administer the entire region of Valsesia, paid for by the counts but selected from among the top citizens of Vercelli. Of course, the Biandrate had no desire to pay for this administrator with their own funds, so they naturally passed the tax burden directly onto the Valsesians, forcing them to pay for their own subjugation. With no checks on their feudal power, the Biandrate sought to make an example of the Valsesians and thus increased their fiscal burden dramatically. For example, following the pact, the Biandrate had to pay 500 Pavian *lire* as part of their fodro to the commune of Vercelli, yet the Valsesians had to pay a minimum of 1,000. Of course, these payments were only one part of their tripartite feudal obligations to the counts, which also included labor allocations and agricultural produce. The pact also declared that if any Valsesians were in any way to oppose the terms, they would be labeled

as “rebels” and “bandits” and punished accordingly. As an added measure, the Biandrate were allowed to erect a series of fortifications throughout valley, the expenses for which were also heaped on the Valsesians. All these actions were clearly intended to assert the power of the counts, and by extension Vercelli, over the Valsesians and their attempts to form an autonomous collective.²¹

Rather than quelling dissent, these harsh measures naturally fomented further rebellion that plunged the area into warfare for another 15 years. Although the Biandrate and their Vercellese allies had sufficient material and financial resources to initially combat this insurrection, they were faced with a more ominous foe in the form of the Visconti family of Milan which, with the support of the German Emperor and their rival Novara, was slowly extending Ghibelline control throughout northwestern Italy. The Biandrate and the commune of Vercelli found that fighting both an internal guerilla war and an external imperial army was not feasible and they negotiated a peace with Novara that gave that commune jurisdiction over the troublesome Valsesians. Exhausted from decades of warfare, the commune of Novara decided to settle the matter of Valsesia once and for all and in October 1275 at Gozzano negotiated a treaty that ceded independence to Valsesia.

The Treaty of Gozzano was a watershed moment in the history of Valsesia because it was the culmination of decades of strife and warfare waged by its inhabitants in their efforts to achieve autonomy. In general, the treaty affirmed the complete and total independence of Valsesia from feudal control from the Biandrate, from Vercelli, and even from Novara. The treaty granted jurisdictional rights and independent judicial powers to the Valsesians.²² A key to their political liberation was the newly granted right to elect their own podestà. But one of the most important concessions was that the Biandrate were finally and effectively kicked out of the valley and they and their descendants could not reside or enter Valsesia for any reason.²³ In fact, Novara promised to guarantee the total expulsion of the Biandrate from Valsesia, effectively and permanently ending the control of the counts.²⁴ The *universitas* also no longer had to provide feudal dues or board the horses and soldiers of any lord and they were granted free trade with Novara and its dependents. Another indication of the end of feudal control over Valsesia was that the inhabitants could no longer be expected to be involved in any military campaigns, typically one of the key expectations of subordinates. The treaty further stipulated that Novara would consent to a general amnesty for any Valsesians convicted as bandits or rebels under the earlier agreement between the Biandrate and Vercelli.

The Gozzano treaty also contained two clauses of extreme importance for Valsesian autonomy and which go a long way in explaining how and why they ultimately supported Dolcino and his followers in armed insurrection. The first clause unequivocally states that neither the commune nor the podestà of Novara could transfer, take as hostage or place in confinement any Valsesian, for any

reason whatsoever.²⁵ The other, quite similar, clause mandates that no Valsesian can be forced by the podestà or the commune of Novara or any other person to go to Novara or any other area or be forced into armed service.²⁶ Both of these stipulations certainly guaranteed significant rights to the Valsesians, granting them a sense of autonomy and independence comparable to that enjoyed by many of the Italian communes themselves. Indeed, the treaty as a whole became the basis for all future accords between the Valsesians and powerful entities such as the Sforza, the Visconti, and the Spanish and Austrian dukes.²⁷ But these rights were more immediately important with respect to the arrival of Dolcino and the Apostles. Many of the liberties of the Valsesians would be violated by the presence of both inquisitors, who undermined their judicial authority, and crusaders, who subverted their political and military independence.

For the next 20 years, the Valsesians defended their hard-won autonomy, occasionally rising up against what they called “arrogant” bishops and counts who sought to undermine the treaty and reestablish the old feudal control.²⁸ In virtually all of these instances, the Valsesians prevailed and maintained their sovereignty, even when the whole area of Biella was excommunicated by the bishop of Vercelli in 1291 for its insurrection. Until, that is, 1303, when the papal-backed Guelphs regained control of Vercelli, appointing a conservative bishop who eagerly sought to reassert feudal and ecclesiastical privileges in his diocese, which included Valsesia. And then Dolcino arrived the following year.

HERETICS AND RESISTANCE

Dolcino’s return to Valsesia was prompted by the increasing pressure placed on him and his followers by inquisitors after they had abandoned Parma in 1300 and retreated to the more favorable, yet isolated area near Arco, above Lake Garda. However, in nearby Trent in 1304, the trial and execution of three Apostles, including the wife of Alberto of Cimego, one of their local supporters and benefactors, forced the Apostles to flee the region and head west through the mountains, back to Dolcino’s native land.²⁹ Shortly thereafter, he and a small group of Apostles, both men and women, arrived in the diocese of Vercelli, welcomed by the citizens of the small towns of Gattinara and Serravalle, who themselves were in the midst of yet another revolt against the bishop of nearby Vercelli over issues of autonomy. Aware of its repeated uprisings against outside interference and exploitation, particularly that of the bishop of Vercelli, Valsesia was an ideal region for Dolcino to seek refuge in.³⁰ In this tumultuous climate, the arrival of the Apostles, with their egalitarian radicalism, eventually incurred the wrath of the local lords and the bishop of Vercelli who, concerned about the potential for Dolcino’s message to inspire revolt, together conducted increasingly aggressive attacks on the heretics

and their supporters. The fears of the bishop were well founded, as the Apostles received material support from the inhabitants of Serravalle against the inquisitors who were trailing them.³¹

Despite the common misrepresentation of Dolcino's Apostles as a marauding, murderous group of bandits, the assistance offered by the inhabitants of Serravalle, including even the rector of the church there, indicates that the Order was actually welcomed and supported, at least by the locals, even if it meant running afoul of lords, bishops, and inquisitors.³² Farmers welcomed Dolcino and his Apostles into their homes, and some followers even built numerous dwellings and shelters of their own with the help of a local nobleman, Milano da Sola, remaining *peacefully* for many months around Campertogno despite their fugitive status.³³ According to the *Historia*, men and women traveled from far and wide to hear Dolcino's teachings, swelling the number of his followers.³⁴ This support that the Apostles found among the Valsesians, coupled with the fact that members built shelters and remained there for many months, reveals that the Order did not actively seek to challenge or confront ecclesiastical authorities by force of arms. Instead, Dolcino's Apostles retreated from their pursuers into the secluded areas of Valsesia in order to live peacefully according to their apostolic communalism.

For close to 2 years the Apostles remained in the northern part of the diocese of Vercelli until the bishop, Raniero Avogadro, attempted to remove them by force with help from the Biandrate.³⁵ According to the author of the *Historia*, Bishop Avogadro decided to exterminate the heretics in order to "defend the Catholic faith and the Christian people," even though the Apostles did not pose a direct, physical threat.³⁶ Shortly thereafter, by the summer of 1305, Dolcino and the Apostles found it necessary to retreat further up the valley, taking refuge atop a peak surrounded by sheer cliffs, known as the *Parete Calva*, literally the Bald Wall.³⁷ The *Historia* claims that Dolcino's followers numbered at least 1,400, an unlikely number almost certainly exaggerated by the author to enhance the threat posed by the heretics. The problem with the claim of such a high number of followers is that the actual space atop the *Parete Calva* is physically insufficient to accommodate that many people.³⁸ Indeed, the threat alluded to is minimized within a few lines, if we understand the earlier example of domesticity as relative pacifism, when the author reveals that Dolcino's followers built more houses atop the *Parete Calva*.³⁹ It is worth noting that these examples of home building should not be seen as a violation of the Order's belief in renunciation of property because the stated prohibition was directed more at "permanent" houses, particularly those lavish buildings inhabited by Salimbene and the Franciscans. The use of the diminutive "*habitacula*" reinforces the idea that these constructions were more like shelters designed more for protection against the Alpine elements than for luxury. Moreover, considering the Apostles' belief in the imminent End of Time, discussed below, the shelters built by Dolcino and his supporters were to be very temporary indeed.

It is also likely that the various instances of plundering raids, ascribed directly to the Apostles, may have in fact been carried out by the Valsesians themselves, because the “victims” were almost exclusively from the feudal nobility, their avowed enemies. For example, the *podestà* of the nearby town of Varallo, an ally of both the Biandrate and the bishop of Vercelli who provided them with troops, was one of the first targets. Dolcino’s followers supposedly kidnapped him, holding him hostage until they released him for a ransom.⁴⁰ The *Historia* does not specify what form the ransom took but it was likely food and clothing, and not money, for two reasons. First, monetary wealth was anathema to the Order, especially the followers of Dolcino, as it represented materialism in violation of the *vita apostolica*. Second, the remainder of the *Historia* repeatedly indicates that the rebels, Apostles and Valsesians, were on the brink of starvation and exposed to the harsh Alpine elements, and thus in dire need of food, not money.⁴¹

Despite the assistance of the Valsesians, military efforts against the Apostles intensified and by early March 1306 Dolcino realized that the *Parete Calva* could no longer provide them with adequate protection or provisions. In a desperate move on the night of March 10, Dolcino and the Apostles fled the *Parete Calva*, undertaking a long trek in the darkness “through high mountains, unknown paths, unreachable places and high snows,” finally fortifying themselves high atop Mount Rubello, above the small village of Trivero.⁴² Only with the dawn of the next day did the bishop realize that the Apostles had escaped, but by then it was too late to capture the fugitives and he was forced to withdraw his troops and regroup at the foot of the mountains. But as the Apostles dug into their positions, Avogadro, on the advice of his officers and other nobles, requested and received direct papal aid for his newly planned offensive. The support from newly elected Pope Clement V came in the form of a proclamation of crusade against the heretics, offering plenary indulgences to “all of Christ’s faithful who personally go to fight and exterminate” the heretics or those who provided material or monetary support for others to fight against them.⁴³ Bishop Avogadro used this newfound support to blockade virtually all access to and from Mount Rubello, thus weakening the Apostles by cutting them off from all supplies during the harsh winter and forcing them deeper into starvation.

HERETICAL ATROCITIES

It was during this siege that the *Historia* records a number of atrocities attributed to the Apostles, including the plundering of churches as well as more vile acts such as the torture, mutilation, and murder of innocent men, women, and children. The text claims that the heretics swooped down out of the hills and attacked the small town of Trivero, robbing the local church of its chalices, books, and other goods and then raiding many homes as well.⁴⁴ By including the theft

of the church's sacred items, the author of the *Historia* attempted to demonstrate the extent of the Apostles' impiety and wickedness. Yet at the beginning of the description of the raid, the author clearly points out that the heretics had absolutely no food, and thus it seems illogical that a starving band of people would steal valuable, but inedible, items like chalices and books. Even if one were to argue that the heretics could sell the holy items to purchase food, it does not take into account the fact the bishop had blockaded the area, leaving no one with whom to trade. Likewise, in the nearby church of Mosso, the Apostles were accused of "committing many evils," including the tearing down of the altar, along with the linens and other goods, apparently intending to take these items back with them to Mount Rubello.⁴⁵ As with the alleged sack of Trivero, the details of the incident at Mosso do not seem very plausible because, given the extent of starvation among the Apostles, their first priority would have been locating food and supplies, not desecrating churches. These apparent inconsistencies raise questions about the veracity of these and other, more despicable acts catalogued in the *Historia*. These atrocities, therefore, seem more consistent with the need of the establishment to stigmatize the rebels than with the likely motivations of Dolcino and his followers.

In addition to the despoiling of churches, the author of the *Historia* relates a number of bloody atrocities committed by the heretics against the innocent people living nearby who were abducted back to Mount Rubello. The numerous evils perpetuated by the "vile heretics" included hanging many Christian faithful on gallows, among them an "innocent ten year old boy," as well as hanging many other men right before the eyes of their wives and parents.⁴⁶ The heretics did not reserve their sadism for men alone, as they apparently cut off the lips and noses of some women, the breasts of others, and the feet of still others.⁴⁷ In another instance, they cut off the hands and arms of a pregnant woman, who subsequently gave birth to baby boy that "immediately died without baptism."⁴⁸ Despite all the grim details given by the author, he repeatedly states that all these horrors inflicted on the faithful took place atop Mount Rubello, yet he was not present there himself nor does he indicate that his information came from eyewitnesses. These unverifiable atrocities are likely part of the larger smear campaign by the author of the *Historia* against the Apostles, strikingly similar in intent to those other unverifiable stories about the immoral actions of Segarelli's Apostles recounted by Salimbene. The alleged desecrations and atrocities inflicted on numerous nearby villages seem implausible because episcopal forces had blockaded Mount Rubello, effectively trapping the Apostles. Moreover, starvation and exposure had so severely weakened the Apostles that plundering raids and sorties, especially those with goals other than food, were highly unlikely.

RESISTANCE AND ANNIHILATION

By March 23, 1307, the Apostles' strength had deteriorated to such a degree that, in a final, pitched battle, ecclesiastical forces overran their meager defenses, decisively attacking and decimating the starving ranks of the Apostles near Stavello.⁴⁹ The Order's egalitarianism, however, apparently endured until the very end, for the author of the *Historia* noted that women fought equally alongside the men, wearing male clothes and wielding male weapons.⁵⁰ This equality did not save the Apostles from the swords of the crusaders, who massacred virtually every last member. The slaughter was of such a massive scale that bodies were strewn far and wide across the hillsides and into the Sessera River below. In fact, the author of the *Historia* wrote that the river was afterward renamed the River of Carnage "because the water of this river was red like blood due to the bodies of the dead and wounded."⁵¹

Dolcino, along with Margherita of Trent, Longino of Bergamo, and a handful of others, were captured alive and taken into custody by the bishop, where they remained imprisoned in nearby Biella for over 2 months, awaiting Pope Clement V's decision on their ultimate fate. Clement responded that the heretics should be turned over to the secular authorities for "judgment," a virtual death sentence.⁵² Indeed, public executions were scheduled for June 1, 1307. Margherita was scheduled for burning first.⁵³ Many men apparently jumped forward to "save" her from the flames, offering her pardon if she would only renounce the heresiarch and marry like a "respectable" woman. Margherita refused to betray her allegiance to Dolcino and his teachings, so she was promptly sent to her death and burned right before Dolcino's eyes.⁵⁴ Dolcino and Longino followed her in short order, but their deaths occurred much more slowly and painfully. The two of them were horribly tortured as they were pushed through the streets on carts "so that all could see," their flesh slowly burned and mutilated with tongs and hot irons, making their punishment lengthier and more intense.⁵⁵ Dolcino's torturous execution therefore brought to a bloody and violent end the Order of Apostles.

CONCLUSION

For the Valsesians, most of the thirteenth century had been marked by a pattern of oppression, first by the feudal counts of Biandrate and then later by the communes of Vercelli and Novara. After several decades of autonomy, they saw their hard-fought independence threatened by a resurgence of these forces and rightfully feared the possibility of being subjected once again to outside control. When the bishop of Vercelli decided to pursue Dolcino and the Apostles

into Valsesian territory, this act was not only a general violation of their autonomy in pursuit of a random heretic. Dolcino's family heritage and his birth in Romagnano Sesia made him a Valsesian, and thus the bishop, inquisitors, and crusaders were wrongfully pursuing one of their own citizens in their own sovereign territory. That fact alone makes it no surprise that the Valsesians ended up supporting Dolcino and his followers by rising in a massive insurrection in defense of their rights.⁵⁶

By relocating from Trent to Valsesia, Dolcino and his followers took advantage of the valley's hard-won autonomy as an ideal place of refuge. Their ideology of apostolic poverty as the key to purity and salvation was well received by many residents, especially in Alta Valsesia, because they themselves were already poor. But Dolcino's vociferous opposition to alleged church corruption and greed was also incredibly appealing to the notoriously independent Valsesians, who understandably supported his movement, even only if out of political expediency.

It was in such a climate that Dolcino and the Apostles took it upon themselves to usher in the last days as best they could, even fighting for it if they had to. This change in the Order's belief in apostolic poverty is what I refer to as *apocalyptic* poverty. It is similar to apostolic poverty in that its adherents continued to proclaim the model of the original apostles, but the crucial difference is that such an understanding actively sought to hasten the coming purge. Due to the intimate relationship between apocalyptic ideas and active, if not aggressive, behavior, the Order's involvement in a violent rebellion was thus no mere coincidence. As the last and only true spirituals, Dolcino and the Apostles saw it as their duty to preach and, ultimately, fight against the Antichrist by whatever means necessary and at any cost. Even if Dolcino did not personally call for aggressive resistance, the very core of apocalyptic spirituality has always contained dramatically violent imagery regarding the struggle of good and evil, including the expectation that the "true" believer must actively choose sides. In the case of the Apostles, the sight of advancing armies of crusaders obviously made such a choice incredibly urgent.

Yet, if one follows their pattern of behavior as far back as 1300, flight rather than fight was the norm. They fled after Segarelli's execution, after executions in Trent, after the arrival of inquisitors in Gattinara, and even after the initial onslaught of crusaders against their settlements on the *Parete Calva*. This consistent retreat, in part, is what makes the stories of Dolcinite atrocities so unbelievable. It was only during their final stand atop Mount Rubello that they likely actively fought back, weakened as they were by cold and starvation. In the end, the hoped-for apocalyptic cataclysm did indeed occur, but not as they had expected since the victims were Fra Dolcino and the Apostles themselves.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been twofold: first to show how contemporary chroniclers and modern historians have misrepresented the Order of the Apostles, and, second, to illuminate the Order's internal dynamics, that is the nature of its membership and the character of the group's motivation. The dominant view concerning the Apostles has been that they were a lower-class, uneducated lot who, under the charismatic apocalypticism of their leader, Fra Dolcino, rose in armed rebellion against the church and its supporters, putting all who opposed them to the sword until they themselves were annihilated. One problem with this presentation is that it compresses the Order into a rigid, monolithic, and unchanging group, despite the fact that two very different men led the Order during a history that lasted over a half-century. A second problem is that the history of the Order has often been presented without a critical analysis of the historical evidence, simply repeating the bias and invective found in sources such as Salimbene's *Cronica* and the anonymous *Historia Dulcini Heresiarche*. Thus, these presentations have hidden the true history of the Order of Apostles, obscuring the men and women who joined, as well as their reasons for doing so.

There are really two histories, or phases, of the Order of Apostles. The first phase of the Order, spanning the penitential career of Gerard Segarelli from the Order's beginning in 1260 to his execution in 1300, is marked by its peaceful, simplistic activities that remained orthodox and accepted, or at least tolerated, by ecclesiastical authorities. The second, and much shorter, phase covers the last 7 years of the Order, from Dolcino's assumption of leadership immediately following Segarelli's execution to his own trial and execution in 1307. This second phase is significant because in it Dolcino came to believe that the group's apostolic lifestyle endowed its members with special spiritual authority over and against that of the Roman Church, which he believed had corrupted itself through the acquisition of material wealth and temporal power. For Dolcino and his followers, this transfer of authority signified the coming Armageddon and the final battle of the Apocalypse, a battle in which they saw themselves as righteous and victorious.

For 40 years, from 1260 to 1300, the Order of Apostles grew, gathering both members and supporters from all over Italy with its message of poverty and penance. During most of this period, until 1296, the Order remained orthodox, receiving support and encouragement from many ecclesiastical officials, most

significantly Obizzo Sanvitale, the bishop of Parma. The most significant opposition to the Order dating from this time and still traceable today came from the Franciscan, Salimbene, who considered Segarelli and his Apostles illiterate and illegitimate. The source of Salimbene's disapproval, hatred even, was the fact that the citizens of Parma praised the Apostles more than the Franciscans as true followers of the *vita apostolica*. In practical terms, this public support manifested itself financially in the form of donations and alms that had previously gone to the Franciscans. Thus Salimbene's opposition to the Apostles was less about their religious lifestyle and more about their economic rivalry. Salimbene's views, however, were in the minority, evidenced by the widespread and long-term support of the Apostles. Salimbene's antagonism notwithstanding, ecclesiastical support from someone as prominent as the bishop of Parma suggests that there was little, if any, friction between the Order and church authorities. In fact, no evidence remains of any anticlerical themes in the preaching of the Apostles over the course of these first 40 years, even after Dolcino, noted for his later anticlericalism, joined the Order in 1291.

Only when this level of support began to ebb did the Order's ideology undergo a gradual shift toward a more negative and antagonistic view of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Bishop Sanvitale's transfer to Ravenna in 1295 effectively ended the safe and supportive atmosphere in Parma that the Apostles had grown accustomed to, as the following year witnessed the execution of four Apostles and the perpetual imprisonment of Segarelli. These drastic changes, coupled with the convening of Dominican-led inquisitorial tribunals, soured the Apostles' perception of the church. When the Dominicans handed Segarelli over to the secular authorities for execution as a heretic, the Order's resentment and enmity was complete. This animosity then found its outlet in Dolcino's apocalypticism.

Dolcino's beliefs were not inherently anticlerical or violent, especially during his early years as an Apostle, when Segarelli was still alive. Significantly, Dolcino's apocalypticism, with its depiction of a vile and corrupt Roman Church, does not appear until *after* Segarelli's execution, some 10 years after Dolcino himself joined the Order. Only in response to persistent inquisitorial persecution did Dolcino's, and thus the Order's, beliefs change from benign evangelical poverty to apocalyptic opposition. Even then, despite the traditional view of Dolcino as a rabid and violent end-time prophet, the group's activities from Trent to Valsesia indicate that they simply hoped to wait out the coming tribulations, not actively facilitate them through violence. The very fact that Dolcino and the Apostles built homes and shelters in the alpine valleys, on more than one occasion, supports the idea that their activity was not hostile, but even domestic and peaceable. Moreover, when the first episcopal forces arrived from the bishop of Vercelli, it was the local Valsesians, not the Apostles, who put up fierce, armed resistance, just as they had done many times before over the course of the previous century. Only when the

bishop of Vercelli continued to renew his assaults, and the Apostles and their supporters faced starvation and blizzards, did Dolcino's passive apocalypticism turn aggressive. Therefore, just as the persecution and execution of Segarelli precipitated the Order's change from apostolic to apocalyptic poverty, so the persecution by inquisitorial and episcopal forces in Valsesia caused Dolcino's millennialism to become violent.

These changes to the ideology of the Order of Apostles are significant for understanding apocalypticism and violence not only in the Middle Ages but also through all the intervening centuries up to the present day. The influence of persecution, or at least the perception of persecution, on marginal groups can have devastatingly violent effects, especially if part of the group's self-perception revolves around biblical concepts of good and evil. In the case of the Apostles, ecclesiastical persecution fostered an apocalyptic theology that, when confronted by further persecution, confirmed the Order's belief that it alone remained true to the legacy of Jesus and the early church. A major consequence of this apocalypticism was the Order's firm conviction that all who opposed them, in this case the Roman Church, were agents of the Antichrist and the devil, and that they should resist these forces of evil by any means necessary. The fact that strikingly similar ideological developments have occurred with Thomas Muntzer and the German Peasants' Revolt, the Bohemian Taborites, nineteenth-century Mormons, the Peoples' Temple of Jim Jones, the Branch Davidians of David Koresh, and the Aum Shinrikyo movement in Japan, among others, should draw attention to the volatile intersection of apocalypticism, persecution, and violence.

Epilogue: Stones of Remembrance

Despite every effort of the bishop of Vercelli, inquisitors, executioners, and scribes, the story of Segarelli, Dolcino, and the Apostles did not fade away even if their ashes did. Nor did the controversy surrounding the group's motives and identity. In fact, the collective memory regarding Dolcino and the Apostles is still contested even today, nearly 700 years after the Order's demise in the form of monuments and memorials. Most of the sites of memory are located in northern Piedmont where the Apostles were active and met their doom. These vibrant and ongoing memorials range from the active and almost belligerent (plaques and monuments with confrontational language) to the benign (neutral street signs).

Public monuments seem to be inherently controversial, whether it involves public approval of art installations or perhaps the more contentious historical monuments and exhibits. One needs only to recall the 1994 controversy surrounding the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum's attempt to create a 50th anniversary exhibit of the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, which became a flashpoint for the so-called culture wars over history and its interpretation. Some groups were outraged that the museum dared to show the victim's perspective by displaying a child's metal lunchbox that had been partially melted, which they interpreted as a condemnation of American militarism. Similar controversy has surrounded Holocaust memorials, especially in Germany, where issues of remembrance, guilt, and complicity often clash. In the United States the debate continues to rage over memorials confronting slavery, the Civil War, and Japanese internment camps. Although the history of Fra Dolcino and his followers is in no way comparable to that of the Holocaust or Hiroshima, the controversies surrounding their memorialization are often equally contentious, but on a much smaller scale.

One of the first memorials to the history of Dolcino was a small chapel erected in 1407, on the 100th "anniversary" of his defeat. This chapel, dedicated to St Bernard, was supposedly erected by the inhabitants of the nearby village of Trivero, a location purportedly sacked by Dolcino and his followers during the long alpine siege. Funding for the chapel, at first little more than a hut, likely came from the bishop of Vercelli who no doubt wanted to fondly remember his predecessor's decisive defeat of the heretics. The location is significant because it is atop a mountain peak at or near the site of the final battle between ecclesiastical

forces and the heretics, originally called Mt Zubello, but renamed Mt Rubello/Rebello shortly after their defeat.

Damaged by lightning in 1573, the chapel was finally restored in 1782 but did not take on its modern appearance until 1837. Aside from the actual construction of the chapel as a memorial, it is also significant for the favor shown to it by ecclesiastics. Two popes decreed plenary indulgences to all pilgrims journeying to the chapel, Felix V in 1450 (the last “antipope” whose resignation ended the Great Schism) and Pius X in 1907 (celebrating the 600th anniversary of the defeat of Dolcino). More important for the purposes of memory, in 1839 Bishop Losana of Biella officiated at and blessed the chapel, which had been restored just 2 years prior and commissioned the installation of a plaque commemorating the church’s great victory over the heretics. Inscribed in Latin, the plaque reads: “This sacred monument is witness/testimony to the defeat of Dolcino by the terrible effort of the Church (supreme religion) and the republic and of the fortitude and grateful spirit of our ancestors.” Thus by the date of its construction, its placement at or near the final battle site, and the religious importance heaped upon it by ecclesiastics, not to mention the commemorative plaque, the chapel of San Bernardo became and remains a key “official” interpretation and preservation of the memory of Dolcino as a rebel and a heretic.

The chapel, however, would not stand alone as the only monument to the heretics. In fact, near the end of the 19th century, Mt Rubello (at least, the opposite end of the mountaintop) would become a focal point for local workers’ unions, socialist meetings, and other politically and ideologically charged conventions that saw in Dolcino’s rebellion striking similarities to their own. Just to list some examples, in 1877 the leaders of a local textile workers strike chose to hold their meeting atop Mt Rubello; on May 1, 1890 a massive red banner was unfurled on the mountaintop; in 1895 150 socialists held a convention atop Rubello to found their socialist newspaper, originally titled “Monte Rubello,” but had to change the name to “Corriere Biellese” because the previous journal name had already been taken.

Of these revolutionary or antiestablishment events, perhaps the most significant was the erection of a new monument to Dolcino on the 600th anniversary of his defeat, or for the revolutionaries, Dolcino’s martyrdom. At almost the same time that bishop Losana was dedicating the plaque praising the defenders of the faith, local socialists and libertarians (Biellese and Valsesians), decided to construct their own, more positive monument, to counter that of the church. The very location of the monument was designed to challenge and provoke, being placed, as it were, directly across the ridge from the chapel of San Bernardo. Indeed, the two monuments, already placed atop towering peaks, literally faced off against one another. This obelisk was approximately 12 meters high and inaugurated on

August 11, 1907 with an estimated 10,000 people in attendance, most of them Biellese and Valsesian workers.

Four plaques were fixed into the stone near the obelisk's base, inscribed with verses from Dante's *Inferno* where Muhammad offers some advice to Dolcino:

Then you, who will perhaps soon see the sun, tell Fra Dolcino to provide himself with food, if he has no desire to join me here quickly, lest when snow besieges him, it bring the Novarese the victory that otherwise they would not find too easy. (XXVIII, 55–60)

The pro-Dolcino obelisk was apparently not appreciated by all the inhabitants, especially the clerics who had recently participated in bishop Losana's chapel dedication. In the autumn of 1907, at most a few months after its inauguration, the obelisk was vandalized and the Dante plaques damaged by these same clerics. Ten years later, in 1917, the obelisk was further damaged by unknown assailants. However, the most serious attack on the obelisk came in 1927 when, on August 2, a coalition of clerics and Blackshirt fascists under Mussolini, dynamited the monument and destroyed it.

The obelisk lay in ruins for almost 50 years until September 14, 1974 when a new monument was inaugurated, built upon and out of the remains of the previous monument's foundation. This new monument, like its predecessor, was obviously placed in a standoff position with its rival across the ridge, the chapel of San Bernardo. A large group was on hand for the dedication, including prominent local politicians, members of a revived Waldensian church and members of the alpine Resistance against wartime fascism. As something of an aside, this date also saw the inauguration of the Ca dë Studi Dossinian (the Biellese name for the Center for the Study of Dolcino), an organization in Biella that even today is housed inside a small Waldensian church. The use of Biellese, the local dialect, in the center's official name is part of the long-standing tradition of regional independence (especially from outside political and religious control) that the Biellese and the Valsesians have asserted since even before the revolt of Dolcino.

The new obelisk to Dolcino (which has remained dynamite free for three decades) bears a number of unique items that further illustrate the contested nature of this bit of history. For example, a plaque installed on the reconstructed base commemorates the "martyrdom" of Dolcino while still calling attention to and assigning blame for the 1927 destruction of the first monument. It reads: "On the 600th anniversary of the martyrdom of Fra Dolcino, the people installed this obelisk, destroyed at night by the fascists, symbolically rededicated Sept. 15, 1972." On another corner of the monument sits a large stone, with large blood red words painted on it that say: "These stones are sacred." The emphasis on sacredness may be another attempt to highlight how "unholy" the clerics were who helped destroy

a monument dedicated to those killed during the antiheretical crusade. A final plaque on the new obelisk is this smooth piece of granite with the text etched in bright red. The text is a quote from the Gospel of Luke, which reads, again in Biellese, the local dialect, “And now let he who does not have a sword sell his mantle and buy one” (Lk. 22.3). This text exhibits the defiance traditionally seen among the Biellese and Valsesians, first through its use of the local dialect in the scriptural reference (thus not in Latin or official Italian) and second in the very lines themselves that not so subtly provide messianic validation and justification of violence, presumably against the enemies of Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Despite the passage of nearly seven centuries, the history of Fra Dolcino and the Order of Apostles has been kept alive through contested and competing monuments, plaques, and inscriptions throughout the region of Valsesia. Some populist groups, such as socialist and religious reformers, have approvingly adopted the history of Dolcino and the Order because they believe it mirrors their own struggles of defiance. More conservative groups, such as the Catholic Church, have strongly disapproved of any positive memorializing of the Order and have erected their own interpretive monuments that commemorate the destruction of the heretics and praise the crusading defenders of the faith. With the 700th anniversary of Dolcino’s death in 2007, new monuments were installed in extravagant ceremonies, with local mayors, politicians, artists, and writers in attendance, often in conjunction with academic conferences on the history of the Apostles. These monuments clearly indicate that Gerard Segarelli, Fra Dolcino, and the Apostles still stir emotional responses seven centuries later, especially in Valsesia, highlighting the tension and controversy regarding how to commemorate a troubled and violent past.

Notes

NOTES TO PROLOGUE

1. See Tim Moynihan, "Waco Siege Ends in Inferno," *The Press Association*, 19 April 1993; Dick Kelsey, "Flames Destroy Koresh Compound, Ending 51-day Siege," *United Press International*, 19 April 1993; Sue Anne Pressley, "Waco Siege Ends in Dozens of Deaths As Cult Site Burns After FBI Assault; Davidians Set Blaze, Officials Say," *The Washington Post*, 20 April 1993, sec. 1A, 1; Sam Howe Verhovek, "Death in Waco," *The New York Times*, 20 April 1993, sec. 1A, 1.
2. "Cults" have received wide-ranging media coverage, especially since the mass-suicide of members of the Peoples Temple, led by Jim Jones, in 1978. During the 1980s, the focus was on "Satanic" underground movements, which allegedly abducted or even bred children for ritualistic abuse and/or sacrifice. With the discrediting of Satanic "victims," media attention then turned to "Doomsday" cults, which included the Branch Davidians of Waco, the Solar Temple homicides/suicides in Quebec and Switzerland in 1994, the gas attack on the Tokyo subway system in 1995 by Aum Shinrikyō, and the Heaven's gate group-suicide in 1997 near San Diego. See Catherine Wessinger (ed.), *Millennialism, Persecution and Violence: Historical Cases* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000); Jeffrey S. Victor, *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993); Debbie Nathan and Michael Snedeker, *Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witch Hunt* (New York: Basic Books, 1995); Philip Jenkins, *Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New Religions in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1: TELL FRA DOLCINO TO PREPARE HIMSELF

1. Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, Canto XXVIII, ll. 55–60:
"Or di a fra Dolcin dunque che s'armi, / tu che forse vedrà il sole in breve, / s'ello non vuol qui tosto sequitarmi, / sì di vivanda, che stretta di neve / non rechi la vittoria al noarese, / ch'altrimenti acquistar non saria leve." The translation is my own.
2. Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, William Weaver (trans.) (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994), 119, 200, 222.
3. *Ibid.*, 384.
4. See Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (rev. edn) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), especially Chapters 2 and 3, 37–70.

5. See Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1955), vol. 3, 104–24; Antonio C. N. Gallenga, *A Historical Memoir of Fra Dolcino and His Times* (London: Longman, Green & Longman, 1853); S. D. Skaskin, *Le Condizioni Storiche della Rivolta di Dolcino* (Moscow: Academia delle Scienze dell' U.R.S.S., 1955).
6. Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis* 125 (Turnhout, 1998), 1/418.1–6, 439–40. This edition is a revised and newly annotated version of the same editor's 1966 publication, Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.), 2 vols (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1998) [hereafter cited as *Cronica* with the volume, chapter, line and page noted respectively]. Bernard Gui, *De secta illorum qui se dicunt esse de ordine apostolorum, Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, L. A. Muratori (ed.) (Citta di Castello, 1907) volume 9, part 5, 19. Hereafter cited as *De Secta*. The surviving manuscript is located in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana (Milan), A.129 in f., ff.129r–150r, and has not been translated into English. In addition to Gui's *De secta*, the primary sources for the study of the history of the Apostles under Dolcino include another of Gui's works, *Inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*, G. Mollat (ed.), *Manuel de l'Inquisiteur*, 2 vols (Paris, 1964); the anonymous *Historia fratris Dulcini heresiarche* (Milan), H. 80 in f., ff. 28r–47r (hereafter cited as *Historia*). Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
7. See Chapter 6 for a more complete analysis of the language used by Salimbene to intentionally slander Segarelli and his followers as illiterate and licentious.
8. *Historia*, f.35v: "Opera autem ipsorum Dulcini et sequacium eius erant abominabilia et nefanda et predicationes eorum erronee et heretica dogmata ipsorum maledicta et omnimodo contra normam fidei orthodoxe" and "dicti pestiferi canes sex alios montes ibi prope existentes de suis gentibus munierunt."
9. These documents are located at the University of Pennsylvania's Henry Charles Lea Library. See Edward Peters discussion of Lea in Edward Peters, *Inquisition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 287–92.
10. One of Lea's earliest biographers, Edward Bradley, noted that Lea saw fit to use the medieval inquisition as a means to show just how far "modern" society had progressed from the blackness of the Middle Ages. See Edward Sculley Bradley, *Henry Charles Lea: A Biography* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931), 242–4. Bradley's entire discussion of Lea's *Inquisition* can be found on 237–77.
11. Lea, *Inquisition*, v. 3, 641–2.
12. Lea, *Inquisition*, v. 1, 364. Lea also characterized the inquisition as marked by "fanatic zeal, arbitrary cruelty, and insatiable cupidity," and as an "unspeakably atrocious system;" Lea, *Inquisition*, v. 1, 401.
13. *Ibid.*, v.1, 561.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, v. 1, 59.
16. *Ibid.*, v. 1, 59–60. In his conclusion, Lea noted that, despite the problems of the human institutions of his day, "a comparison with the past shows how marvelous has been the improvement," and affords "the most cheerful encouragement." See Lea, *Inquisition*, v. 3, 649–50.

17. Ibid., v. 1, 60.
18. Ibid., v. 3, 104. Lea's entire discussion of the Order can be found on 104–24.
19. Ibid., v. 3, 103–4.
20. Ibid., v. 3, 111; Lea also states that Dolcino's lineage might also be traced to a hermit from the mountains near Novara, which still serves to call into question the legitimacy of his birth.
21. Ibid., v. 3, 112–18.
22. Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967; reprinted, Manchester, 1999), 195. For his complete discussion of the Order of Apostles see 191–5.
23. Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969; repr. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 242–3.
24. Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, 244–7.
25. Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation* (3rd edn) (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 202–3.
26. Eugen Weber, *Apocalypses: Prophecies, Cults, and Millennial Beliefs Through the Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 54.
27. See David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).
28. Though Salimbene specifically accuses Segarelli and his Apostles of feigning piety to engage in illicit sex, such allegations regarding Dolcino are significantly absent from Gui's works.
29. Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-states in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 87.
30. Martines, *Power and Imagination*, 87–93.
31. Martines' statement regarding heresy and class is as follows: "Like orthodoxy itself, heresy knew no class boundaries, though its perimeters were restricted largely to the artisanal world, to the commercial middle class, and to a smattering here and there of the nobility. Mystics and excitable men, such as Gherardo Segarelli, sprung from the poorer ranks of society, were offset by their kind higher up on the social scale- St Francis of Assisi or the ardent Florentine mystic Umiliana de Cerchi," *ibid.*, 87.
32. See for example, Alberto Bossi, "Fra Dolcino e i valesiani," *Novarien*, 5 (1973), 29–58, who argues that it was not so much Dolcino's apocalypticism that appealed to the Valsesians, but rather his repudiation of ecclesiastical privileges, such as tithes; Eugenio Dupré Théseider, "Fra Dolcino: Storia e mito," *Bollettino della Società di Studi Valdesi*, no. 104 (1958), 5–25, who attempts to separate the Dolcino of myth from the Dolcino of history, in part by disputing the number of followers that have been used by detractors to exaggerate the Order's threat, and by supporters to emphasize the breadth of Italian anticlericalism; Grado Giovanni Merlo, "Il problema di Fra Dolcino negli ultimi vent'anni," *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino*, no. 72 (1974), 701–8, in which Merlo examines how historians, especially those influenced by the social activism of the 1960s, have often styled Dolcino as a social reformer whose beliefs anticipated the civil rights movement. See also Merlo, "Fra Dolcino e i movimenti di rivolta contadina." In *Storia della società*

- italiana: La crisi del sistema comunale*, Part II, vol. 7 (Milano, 1982), 281–99, which attributes Dolcino's lengthy standoff with ecclesiastical and feudal authorities as possible only in the light of the ongoing struggles between the Valsesians and their so-called overlords.
33. Benevenuti de Rambaldis de Imola, *Comentum super Dantis Aldighherij comoediam, nunc primum integer in lucem editum* (Florence: Typis G. Barbera, 1887), vol. 2, 332–63.
 34. Raniero Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha: Il Movimento Apostolico-Dolciniano dal 1260 al 1307* (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medio Evo, 1988), 95–104.
 35. See Orioli, *Venit perfidus*, 109–14.
 36. This view has been expressed in popular fiction as well, as noted in the introduction to this chapter, most notably in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. In Eco's version, Dolcino misinterpreted the intent of Scriptural authors and was "a man who did insane things because he put into practice what the saints preached," and was also guilty of "carrying war everywhere," Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, 119, 228.
 37. Antonio Labriola, *Socialism and Philosophy*, Ernest Untermann (trans.) (St Louis: Telos Press, 1980), IX, 146. See also Labriola, *Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History*, Charles H. Kerr (trans.) (Chicago, IL: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1904), 73–4.
 38. Labriola, *Socialism and Philosophy*, IX, 145.
 39. Ibid.
 40. For a much later Marxist interpretation from China, see Zhen Ge, "Ouzhou zongjiao gaikede fenqi ji qi ruogan wenti," *Shixue yuekan*, n. 6 (1991), 82–8, where Segarelli, a "working class heretic," is credited not only as the founder of a religious reform movement, but more importantly as the first in a long line of reformers who actively fought against both feudalism and the hegemony of the Catholic and Anglican churches well into the seventeenth century. According to Zhen, these reform movements became nationalistic at the end of the fourteenth century, manifesting themselves as the "first bourgeois revolution" during the Reformation and evolving into Calvinism, which "completed the victory of the middle classes." See also Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Millennium: A History of the Last Thousand Years* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 162, who styles Dolcino's revolt as primarily a "social rebellion" that had radical religious undertones.
 41. For a similar treatment of the convergence of religion, rebellion, and violent suppression regarding Palma Sola, a millenarian peasant movement in the Dominican Republic circa 1962, and which uses the Order of Apostles as a comparative model, see Jan Lundius, *Peasants and Religion: A Socioeconomic Study of Dios Olivorio and the Palma Sola Movement in the Dominican Republic* (New York: Lundius, 2000), 617. This account, taken straight from Malcolm Lambert, emphasizes the lower class origins of Segarelli, as well as the bastard lineage of Dolcino (misspelled as "Dolcini"). Lundius emphasizes (incorrectly) that Segarelli claimed direct inspiration from God in proclaiming his order as the beginning of the Joachite era of the Holy Spirit. Lundius also claims that Dolcino acted upon this same divine inspiration, and that this communication is what rallied local peasants to support him. Lundius' argument here appears to be that their outcast status as well as their holiness appealed to the peasant class, from which they apparently sprang. Accordingly, this influence allowed Dolcino to lead the disaffected peasants into the mountains where they engaged in "plundering raids" against all who opposed

- them, only to be annihilated by armies supporting and supported by the church. Lundius includes the Apostles in his account in part because of his assumption that the Apostles were exclusively a peasant movement, like Palma Sola, swayed, as it were, by a messianic figure who offered temporal and spiritual freedom from their current state of servitude.
42. See Corrado Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana e Resistenza Montanara* (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2002), 51–66, 99–112; Franco Dessilani, “La situazione politica del novarese e della Valsesia all’epoca di Dolcino.” In *Dolcino: Storia, Pensiero, Messaggio*, Comune di Varallo and Centro Studi Dolciniani (eds) (Varallo, Millenia, 2007), 23–50.
 43. Skaskin, *Le condizioni storiche*, 32.
 44. Skaskin, *Le condizioni storiche*, 54–5.
 45. See Chapter 6 and Orioli, *Venit Perfidus*, 325–8.
 46. Skaskin, *Le Condizioni storiche*, 55.
 47. For a similar, albeit shorter, portrayal of the Order violently attacking the “rich,” see John A. F. Thomson, *The Western Church in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 136.
 48. Bernhard Töpfer, “Die apostlebrüder und der aufstand des Dolcino.” In *Städtische volksbewegungen im 14. Jahrhundert*, Ernst Werner and Max Steinmetz (eds) (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1960); Töpfer, *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens: Zur Entwicklung Chiliasmischer Zukunftshoffnungen im Hochmittelalte* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964).
 49. Töpfer, *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens*, 283–9.
 50. Töpfer, *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens*, 288.
 51. Töpfer, *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens*, 289–90. For an analysis of Salimbene’s discussion of the membership of the *Apostolici*, see Chapter 6.
 52. Töpfer, *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens*, 295–305.
 53. Töpfer, *Das Kommende Reich des Friedens*, 308.
 54. For example, see Weber, *Apocalypses*. Damian Thompson, *The End of Time: Faith and Fear in the Shadow of the Millennium* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1996) claims that Dolcino, “the son of a priest from Parma (!),” founded the Apostolic Brethren with the violent overthrow of the church in mind. But, according to Thompson, the Brethren are more than just a revolutionary group, “[t]hey are important in their own right, as one of the first ‘doomsday cults,’” 67–8. Robert A. Wilson, in *Everything is Under Control: Conspiracies, Cults and Cover-ups* (New York: HarperResource, 1998), 263, wildly claims that “Conspirologists find Joachim interesting because he founded an order called the Illuminated Ones or *Illuminati*, which after a few centuries of poverty and piety, suddenly, under the influence of one Fra Dolcino, turned violent, plundered the homes of the rich, preached general revolution, and were wiped out by an army led by the bishop of Vercueil (sic) in 1507 (sic).” For a balanced assessment of these issues, see Orioli’s discussion of Dolcino’s lineage and apocalypticism, *Venit perfidus*, 87–151.
 55. Frederic J. Baumgartner, *Longing for the End: A History of Millennialism in Western Civilization* (New York: Palgrave, 1999), 72–3.
 56. Baumgartner, *Longing for the End*, 72.
 57. *Ibid.*
 58. *Ibid.*, 73.
 59. *Ibid.*, 73.

60. For more detailed accounts of the episcopal and feudal incursions into Valsesia, and their results, see Alberto Bossi, *Fra Dolcino, gli Apostolici e la valsesia* (Borgosesia, 1973), 69–87; Alberto Bossi, “Fra Dolcino e i valesiani,” *Novarien*, 5 (1973), 41–9; Grado Giovanni Merlo, “Fra Dolcino e i movimenti di rivolta contadina.” In *Storia della società italiana: La crisi del sistema comunale*, Giovanni Cherubini, Franco della Peruta, Ettore Leporé, Giorgio Mori, Giulano Procacci and Rosario Villari (eds) (Milan, 1982), pt. 2, vol. 7, 281–99.
61. Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 51–66. For the *Biandrate*, see Paola Guglielmotti, *Comunità e territorio: Villaggi del piemonte medievale* (Rome: Viella, 2001), 183–91.
62. Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 51–66, 99–112, esp. 57–61, 99–112; Franco Dessilani, “La Situazione Politica,” 25–50.
63. Dessilani, *La Situazione Politica*, 37–9.
64. Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 100; see Chapter 9.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2: CHANGING SOCIETY AND ECONOMY, 1000–1250

1. Robert S. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 68.
2. Lopez notes that many wealthy, landed nobles, who also experienced this demographic growth, often sent select family members into these growing cities seeking new financial opportunities, Lopez, *Commercial Revolution*, 67.
3. R. H. Hilton, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 55.
4. Charter of Lorris, articles 2, 5, 18, quoted in Brian Tierney, *The Middle Ages, Volume I: Sources of Medieval History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 191.
5. Charter of Henry I to London, in David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway (eds), *English Historical Documents, 1042–1189* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 1012–13. Emphasis mine. [Selections from above source hereafter cited as EHD].
6. For Lincoln, see Edward P. Cheyney, *Readings in English History Drawn from the Original Sources Intended to Illustrate A Short History of England* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1908), 208; for Ipswich see Carl Stephenson and Frederick George Marcham (eds and trans.), *Sources of English Constitutional History, Volume I: A Selection of Documents from A.D. 600 to the Interregnum* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 96.
7. For Burford, see EHD, #286, 1034; for St Omer see Roy C. Cave and Herbert H. Coulson (eds), *A Source Book for Medieval Economic History* (New York: Bruce Publishing Company, 1936), 200–2.
8. “Let all people know, therefore, that we have granted to our village, Ebenbuchholtz, that municipal freedom which is commonly called “Weichbild.” But because that could not be done without the consent of Sueder of Dingden, to whose county the aforesaid village belonged, we made this agreement with him, that he should give up the “Weichbild” and he should receive in return for it civil jurisdiction over the town, such as he has over our other cities, Münster, Coesfeld, and others.” in Oliver J. Thatcher and Edgar H. McNeal (eds), *A Source Book for Mediæval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Age* (New York: Charles Scribner’s and Sons, 1905), 587–8.

9. One of the best surveys of the rise of the Italian communes in English is still J. K. Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy: The Evolution of the Civil Life, 1000–1350* (London: MacMillan, 1973) as well as Philip Jones, *The Italian City State: From Commune to Signoria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
10. Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, Charles Christopher Mierow (trans.) (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1953), II.xiii, 127–8. Emphasis mine.
11. Benton (ed.), *Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), III.7, 167. Emphasis mine.
12. Benton, *Self and Society*, III.7, 167.
13. Benton, *Self and Society*, III.7, 172.
14. Thatcher, *A Source Book for Mediæval History*, #309, 585–6.
15. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350*, 56.
16. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350*, 86–7.
17. Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*, I.E. Clegg (trans.) (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937), 2.
18. For a brief historical sketch of the rise of Pisa and Genoa, and their ever-growing dominance of the western Mediterranean, see Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350*, 65ff.
19. N. J. G. Pounds, *An Economic History of Medieval Europe* (London: Longman Group, Ltd., 1994), 366.
20. Roy C. Cave and Herbert H. Coulson (eds), *A Source Book for Medieval Economic History* (New York: Bruce Publishing Company, 1936), 180.
21. Le Goff, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, Arthur Goldhammer (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 34.
22. Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work and Culture*, 36.
23. Ibid. It is important to note that Le Goff sees the new techniques for strictly measuring time as an instrument of class struggle and thus an expression of “economic, social and political domination wielded by the merchants who ran the commune,” *ibid.*, 35.
24. Tierney, *The Middle Ages*, #47, 195–6.
25. Cave, *A Source Book*, 201.
26. EHD, 272, 1014–15
27. Tierney, *The Middle Ages*, #47, 196.
28. Ibid., 195.
29. Ibid., 195.
30. It should be noted that in the case of Abelard, Irnerius, and Gratian they did not operate in the university system proper, as the University of Bologna (Irnerius and Gratian) was not officially founded until 1158, while the University of Paris received its official charter in 1200.
31. Helene Wieruszowski, *The Medieval University: Masters, Students, Learning* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1966), 181. Emphasis mine.
32. Ibid.
33. For a more detailed discussion of the foundation of the University of Bologna, see Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1, F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 143ff.
34. Wieruszowski, *The Medieval University*, 183. Emphasis mine.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3: VYING FOR POWER: THE CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

1. For a general overview of Ottonian rule, see Karl Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society: Ottonian Saxony* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1979); Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, 800–1056* (London: Longman, 1991), 148–75.
2. See J. K. Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy: The Evolution of Civil Life, 1000–1350* (New York: MacMillan, 1973), 40ff.
3. Horst Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages, c. 1050–1200*, Timothy Reuter (trans.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 34.
4. It should be noted that Bruno's position as archbishop was not the stereotypical example of nepotism, where the appointee is ill-suited to handle the task. From an early age, Bruno had been properly educated for an ecclesiastical career. For a more thorough discussion of Bruno, see James H. Forse, "Bruno of Cologne and the Networking of the Episcopate in Tenth-Century Germany," *German History* 9, 3 (1991), 263–9.
5. See Karl Leyser, "Ottonian Government," *The English Historical Review* 96, 381, 725–8.
6. Joseph Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought, 300–1450* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 75. See also Walter Ullmann, "The Origins of the Ottonianum," *Cambridge Historical Journal* 11, 1 (1953), 114–28.
7. Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, 800–1056* (London: Longman, 1991), 170–1.
8. See Chapter 4 for a lengthier discussion of reform.
9. Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 40.
10. See Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050–1250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 82–4.
11. *Ibid.*, 84–5.
12. Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 44.
13. Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought*, 49; 77. See also Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 44.
14. Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State*, 44.
15. See Chapter 4 for further discussion of the Patarini and Milanese reform.
16. Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 49.
17. *Ibid.*, 57.
18. *Ibid.*, 61.
19. Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 68.
20. Morris, *The Papal Monarchy*, 158–60.
21. Alfred Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany: 1056–1273*, Helga Braun and Richard Mortimer (trans.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 132.
22. Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany*, 128; 134.
23. Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 96–7. It should be noted that Conrad spent most of his short reign fighting various rebellious German nobles or fighting in the Second Crusade and thus had little time to significantly meddle directly in Italian or papal politics.

24. Although the countess Matilda had bequeathed her lands to Henry V upon her death in 1115, she had also earlier, in 1102, given the pope “nominal overlordship,” which meant that both could lay claim to the land. See Morris, *The Papal Monarchy*, 162.
25. I. S. Robinson, *The Papacy, 1073–1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 453.
26. *Ibid.*, 452.
27. For more discussion of Lothar’s relationship to Innocent and the papacy, see Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany*, 139 and Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 120–2.
28. Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 105.
29. *Ibid.*, 107.
30. In his apologetic letter to the emperor, Pope Adrian explained that “among us beneficium means not a fief but a good deed.” He also clarified that when he said he “conferred” the imperial crown upon Frederick, he meant simply “placed.” *Ibid.*, 109.
31. See Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 147 and Edward Coleman, “Cities and Communes” in Italy in the Central Middle Ages, 1000–1300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 46.
32. According to Fuhrmann, Frederick received a considerable amount of income from the regalia, with an annual income estimated at 100,000 pounds of silver. Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages*, 148.
33. Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany*, 245–6.
34. *Ibid.*, 254–5.
35. David Abulafia, *Frederick II: A Medieval Emperor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 368.
36. Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 386. For his discussion of Innocent’s call to crusade, see 380–9.
37. *Ibid.*, 387–8.
38. See Chapter 4 for further discussion of the Pataria.
39. Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 145.
40. *Ibid.*, 145–6.
41. Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 389.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4: CHURCH REFORM AND ITS AFTERMATH

1. For monastic reform in general and the reforms of Cluny in particular, see Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 65–70.
2. Gerd Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century*, Timothy Reuter (trans.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 113–14.
3. See Morris, *The Papal Monarchy*, 86 and Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany*, 54.

4. The Carthusians, founded in 1083 by Bruno of Cologne, were even more extreme in their interpretation of poverty and labor. More sequestered than the Cistercians, the Carthusians made a direct link between poverty and salvation, denying many of the fineries that marked other monastic orders. See R. I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 47–8.
5. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent*, 49.
6. Morris, *The Papal Monarchy*, 86–7.
7. Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, 73.
8. *Ibid.*, 74.
9. Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 37.
10. *Ibid.*, 40.
11. *Ibid.*, 41–2.
12. Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, 75.
13. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent*, 60.
14. See Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, 75–6.
15. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent*, 45.
16. Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 43.
17. Gregory VII, *Epistolae Vagantes*, H. E. J. Cowdrey (ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 22–4, quoted in Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent*, 55. Examples of Gregory's use of letters that involved the laity and encouraged disobedience to their bishop include, among others, one to the diocese of Constance (Cowdrey, 23–7), to the laity of all Germany against married clerics (Cowdrey, 27), and to the faithful of both Italy and Germany against unchaste clergy (Cowdrey, 85–7).
18. Peter Damian himself, in a letter to Henry IV in 1065, implied that even the obedience owed kings and emperors could be called into question, claiming that a ruler was to be held in high esteem so long as he obeyed God, but “when a king resists the divine commands, it is right that his subjects despise him.” Of course, obeying God in this case clearly was intended to be read as being obedient and in fact subservient to God's ministers on earth, which of course would mean the church in general and the papacy in particular. See Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 39.
19. Moore, *Origins of European Dissent*, 54.
20. For more on the origins and possible meaning of the name “Patarini” see Moore, *Origins of European Dissent*, 57 and Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 44, n. 4.
21. H. E. J. Cowdrey, “The Papacy, the Patarnes and the Church of Milan,” *The Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser. XVIII (1968), 29–30.
22. Cowdrey, “The Papacy,” 30.
23. *Ibid.*, 31.
24. Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power*, 209–10.
25. See Cowdrey, “The Papacy,” 28–9 for a more extensive summary of the situation in Milan.
26. Archbishop Guido's name is variously rendered, depending on the author, as Guido, Guy, or Wido.

27. Ibid., 37–8.
28. I. S. Robinson, *The Papacy, 1073–1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 93–7.
29. Robinson, *The Papacy*, 147. For Robinson's complete and detailed discussion of papal legates see 146–78.
30. Ibid., 147.
31. Ibid., 153.
32. Ibid., 122.
33. Ibid., 123.
34. The text for the First Lateran Council can be found in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Norman P. Tanner (ed. and trans.) (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), vol. 1, 190–4, canons 1, 7, 4, 8, 9, 12, 14, 13 and 10 respectively for each of the prohibitions.
35. Tanner, *Decrees*, 197–203, canons 6–7, 4, 10, 14 and 20.
36. Tanner, *Decrees*, 217–25, canons 1, 3, 7, 11, 25 and 27.
37. Tanner, *Decrees*, 230–71, canons 1, 4, 6, 13, 21 and 68.
38. For a complete list of proclamations, see Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 49–50.
39. Robinson, *The Papacy*, 153.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5: GERARD SEGARELLI'S VITA APOSTOLICA

1. See especially Acts 2.44–7 and 4.32–5, which reveals the communal nature of the original Apostles and emphasizes their lack of material possessions as signs of their sanctity. For a similar theme of renunciation see Lk. 18.18–30.
2. See H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Cluniacs and the Gregorian Reform* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).
3. A discussion of this response to Gregorian reform can be found in Herbert Grundmann, *Religiöse Bewegungen im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1935); 2nd rev. edn (Darmstadt, 1961); Steven Rowan (trans.), Robert Lerner (ed.) as *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 7–8; see also Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation* (2nd edn) (Oxford, 1992), 36–9.
4. See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 36–7.
5. Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, 8.
6. Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, 8. Lambert has noted that “[b]y calling on him to take action against unworthy clergy, the Gregorian movement demanded from the layman a certain personal responsibility . . . [which] was to be fateful for the future development of heresy.” Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 37. See also his continued discussion on this theme, 37–9.
7. Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, 8–9; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 40–2. Note that both authors rely heavily on Johannes von Walter, *Die ersten*

Wanderprediger Frankreichs: Studien zur Geschichte des Mönchtums, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1903–6).

8. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 41.
9. I use the terms “poverty heresy” and “poverty heretics” following a suggestion made by Professor Augustine Thompson, O. P. Such groups embraced the notion of apostolic poverty but applied these standards of poverty to the church as a whole, thus bringing condemnation down upon themselves. Therefore, when the call for a return to Apostolic poverty went out, it often carried with it strong criticisms of the contemporary lifestyle of clerics, thus provoking a harsh reaction, which ultimately led to charges of heresy.
10. This group, identified in most literature simply as the “Cologne heretics,” apparently shared some similarities to Bogomilism and later Catharism. See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 55–8.
11. See Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 10, who uses Abbot Evervin of Steinfeld’s report of interrogations of heresy to Bernard of Clairvaux. For the source, see Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 255–7.
12. Alexander Patschovsky, “The literacy of the Waldensians from Valdes to c. 1400.” In *Heresy and Literacy, 1000–1530*, Peter Biller and Anne Hudson (eds) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 117.
13. See Lambert’s analysis of what essentially amounted to a prohibition of preaching, *Medieval Heresy*, 63–4.
14. The commission’s condescending reference to the Waldensians as *idiotae* (lacking formal training) is identical to Salimbene’s characterization of the Order of Apostles. See below.
15. For this brief background, I have relied upon Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 64, who has noted that the commission asked “trick” questions in order to prove that the Waldensians had only a limited grasp of matters of faith and doctrine. As evidence, Lambert cites Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, M. R. James (ed.) (Oxford, 1914), 60–2. An English translation is available in W. L. Wakefield and A. P. Evans (eds), *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969, repr. 1991), 202–4. See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 64, n. 8.
16. A more detailed discussion of the Waldensians can be found in Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 62–87; see also, Grado Giovanni Merlo, *Valdesi e Valdismi Medievali: Itinerari e proposte di ricerca* (Turin: Claudiana, 1984); Gabriel Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c.1170–c.1570*, Claire Davison (trans.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Euan Cameron, *Waldenses: Rejections of Holy Church in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).
17. Many of these dualistic concepts appeared much earlier in some forms of Gnosticism, as well as in Manichaeism and Bogomilism. See Malcolm Lambert, *The Cathars* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), ch. 1, passim; 158–62; 198–9; Steven Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); Yuri Stoyanov, *The Other God: Dualist Religions from Antiquity to the Cathar Heresy* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000).
18. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 105–6.

19. Norman P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1.230–71.
20. See Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages* (1967; repr. Manchester, 1999), 191–5; Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (1969; repr. Notre Dame, 1993), 242–3.
21. Salimbene de Adam, *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, Joseph L. Baird (ed. and trans.), Giuseppe Baglivi and John Robert Kane, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies*, vol. 40 (Binghamton, New York, 1986), xii.
22. Baird, *Chronicle*, xxiv.
23. Raniero Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha: Il Movimento Apostolico-Dolciniano dal 1260 al 1307* (Rome, 1988), 24. See also, Merlo, “Salimbene e gli Apostolici,” *Società e Storia* 39 (1988), 2–3 for Salimbene’s cultured and aristocratic lifestyle.
24. A contemporary chronicle indicates that Segarelli actually came from a small town outside of Parma, Alçano (modern-day Ozzano Tarò); *Chronicon Parmense ab anno MXXXVIII usque ad annum MCCCXXXVIII*, Giuliano Bonazzi (ed.), *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. 9, part 9 (Città di Castello: Editore S. Lapi, 1902), 67.12–13: “Item . . . de Alçano, nomine frater Gerardus Segharellus, qui dicebatur dominus fratrum Apostolorum.”
25. For the purposes of this work, I have used Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 2 vols (Brepols, 1998) [hereafter cited as *Cronica*], a revised and newly annotated version of the same editor’s 1966 publication, Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.), 2 vols (Bari, 1966). Though an English translation exists (see n. 21, above), all translations from the Latin are my own. Unless otherwise indicated, italics within the body of Latin quotes follows Scalia’s edition, and denotes Scriptural quotations incorporated by Salimbene into his narrative. For this reference see, *Cronica*, 1/369.20–2, 388: “venit quidam iuvenis natione Parmensis, de vili progenie ortus, illitteratus et laycus, ydiota et stultus, cui nomen Gerardinus Segalellus.” Salimbene’s description of Segarelli has been almost universally accepted by historians without criticism or analysis: see above, Chapter 1, as well as Lea, *A History of the Inquisition*, v. 3, 103–9; Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 191–5; Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, 242–3; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 202–3; Jeffrey Richards, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 66.
26. *Cronica*, 1/369.23–9, 389: “Qui cum non exaudiretur ab eis, tota die, quando poterat, morabatur in ecclesia fratrum et cogitabat quod postea stultizando implevit. Nam super coopertorium lampadis societatis et fraternitatis beati Francisci depicti erant apostoli circumcirca cum soleis in pedibus et cum mantellis circa scapulas involuti.”
27. *Cronica*, 1/369.30–6, 388–9: “postquam capillos nutrit et barbam, accepit soleas Ordinis fratrum Minorum et cordam . . . Et fecit sibi fieri de bixetto vestitum et mantellum album de stagmine forti, quem circa collum et scapulas involutum portabat, credens per hoc apostolorum habitum demonstrare.”
28. The podesta’s rostrum was the speaker’s platform before the steps of the town hall, formerly in the Piazza Nuova, now called Piazza Garibaldi. For Segarelli’s actions, see *Cronica*, 1/369.36–370.10, 389: “et vendita domuncula sua et accepta pretio, stetit super lapidem super quem antiquitus potestates Parmenses concionari solebat. Et habens

denariorum sacculum . . . sparsit inter illos alta voce dicendo: 'Quicumque vult, accipiat et habeat sibi!' . . . Credidit iste valde bene implere consilium Domini, qui dicit, Mat. XIX: Si vis perfectus esse, vade et vende omnia que habes et da pauperibus, et habebis thesaurum in coelo, et veni, sequere me."

29. Compare to the renunciation topos in connection with Peter Valdes: Euan Cameron, *Waldenses*, 13. For further discussion of the similarities between Segarelli and Francis, see Mornese, *Fra Dolcino*, 141–50, especially 142 where Mornese likens Segarelli to a second Francis, albeit the Francis of history and not of myth; Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 20; 24–6. For a treatment of Segarelli as a second Valdes, see J. C. De Haan, "La setta degli apostolici e I suoi capi." In *Fra Dolcino e gli Apostolici tra Eresia, Rivolta e Roghi*, Corrado Mornese and Gustavo Buratti (eds) (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2000), 48.
30. *Cronica*, 1/372.11–15, 391: "Porro Ghirardinus Segalellus multis diebus solus ivit per Parmam, quia socium non habebat; et portabat mantellum suum circa scapulas involutum et nemini loquebatur nec quempiam salutabat, credens implere illud Dominicum verbum Luc. X: Neminem per viam salutaveritis."
31. *Cronica*, 1/372.15–19, 391: "Verumtamen verbum Domini frequenter dicebat: 'Penitençágitel!' . . . Et ita processu temporis dixerunt multis diebus sui sequaces."
32. *Cronica*, 1/372.32–373.1, 392: "[F]ratres Minores de Parma habebant quemdam servientem Robertum nomine, qui erat iuvenis inobediens et protervus . . . Huic suasit Ghirardinus Segalellus ut relinqueret fratres et socius suus esset."
33. See note 25 above. Salimbene rarely mentions Segarelli without referring to him as "ydiota et stultus."
34. *Cronica*, 1/373.15–17, 392: "Verumtamen recedens a fratribus furatus est cuppam et cultellum et toaliem fratrum, que habebat ad usum, et asportavit secum."
35. *Cronica*, 1/373.7–9, 392: "Iste itaque Robertus famulus fratrum similis fuit in aliquibus Iude Scariothis, qui Christum Iudeis tradidit."
36. *Cronica* 1/372.19–20, 391: "[Ghirardinus Segalellus] invitabatur ad prandium vel ad cenam aut ad hospitium."
37. *Cronica*, 1/373.20–3, 392–3: "Ibant igitur ambo cum mantellis suis tota die per civitatem, et mirabantur Parmenses. Et ecce subito multiplicati sunt usque ad tricesimum numerum."
38. *Cronica*, 1/382.23–383.1, 402: "[Ghirardinus Segalellus] se et omnes alios denudavit, quod etiam membra genitalia sine braciis et aliquo velamine nuda essent . . . Volebat enim eos expropriare, ut nudi nudum Christi de cetero sequerentur. Posuerat enim quilibet eorum, ex precepto magistri, vestimenta sua in medio domus ligata seorsum. Tunc, ex precepto magistri, cum ita inhoneste starent, introducta est mulier . . . cui Ghirardinus Segalellus, qui magister erat istorum, precepit ut pauperibus sic expropriatis et a propriis denudatis vestimenta que vellet tribueret." Considering Salimbene's stated goal of revealing all the impropriety of the Apostles, it is worth noting that he makes no comment regarding the attire of the women who redistributes the clothes. We must therefore assume that, while the others were naked, she remained clothed, which makes the scenario a bit less scandalous for his audience.
39. See Mornese, *Fra Dolcino*, 73, where he stresses that communal, collective poverty was the condition to be an Apostle.

40. It must be noted that, from Salimbene's account, it is unclear if other women were present and participated directly in the disrobing ceremony. The absence of direct female participation in the ceremony would naturally make the Order's practice less egalitarian than I argue.
41. See Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 18–19; 75–88.
42. *Cronica*, 1/391.3–6, 411: “[C]redentes se esse apostolos ducebant se cum dominam Tripiam . . . nec non et multas alias mulieres.” For further discussion of upper-class members of the Apostles, see below.
43. *Cronica*, 2/819.26–820.2: “De XII mulieribus qui ibant ad fratrem Ghirardinum videndum . . . que se dicebant sorores Appostolissas esse.” This group of women is discussed in greater detail below.
44. Percentage calculated from the appendix in Raniero Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 325–8.
45. *Cronica*, 1/400.28–9, 422: “Et adiscunt (pro pudor!) a feminis quod viros doceant.”
46. *Cronica*, 1/382.30–1, 402: “introducitur est ‘mulier, caput peccati, arma diaboli, expulsio paradisi, delicti mater, corruptio legis antique.’”
47. Salimbene's discussion on the perils of women begins, *Cronica*, 1/190.27, 197: “Quod vitande sint mulieres,” and continues through 1/193, 200.
48. *Cronica*, 1/191.26–193.6, 198–200.
49. See Joan Young Gregg, *Devils, Women, and Jews: Reflections of the Other in Medieval Sermon Stories* (New York, 1997), 83–110. See especially her assertion that “the misogynistic medieval representation of womankind was . . . as a source of evil, confusing man's reason, polluting his virtue and vitiating his loyalty to the God who created him, and Christ, who would save him,” 86–7. Accordingly, women were seen as “betrayers of their faith” and “subverters of the social order,” 87.
50. *Cronica*, 1/373.22–3, 393: “[Apostolos] in quondam domo ad comedendum et dormiendum congregabantur.”
51. *Cronica*, 1/373.24–26, 393: “Et plus et libentius dabant eis Parmenses, concives mei, viri et mulieres, quam fratribus Minoribus et Predicatoribus darent.” Emphasis mine.
52. *Cronica*, 1/371.10–15, 390: “Postmodum ivit ad quoddam castrum, quod appellatur Culliculus sive Colliculus . . . Et stans in media via . . . transeuntibus clara voce dicebat: ‘Ite et vos in vineam meam!’”
53. *Cronica*, 1/382.12–19, 402: “Hi namque de diversis partibus congregati venerunt ad videndum fratrem Ghirardinum Segalellum, eo quod primus eorum fuerit, et tantis eum laudibus extulerunt, ut etiam ipse pro tanto aplausu miratus sit vehementer. Et nichil aliud dicebant, nisi quod congregati circa ipsum in quadam domo bene centies alta voce dicebant: ‘Pater, pater, pater!’ Et post breve intervallum resumebant istud idem et cantabant: ‘Pater, pater, pater!’”
54. *Cronica*, 1/383.8–11, 402: “[M]isit eos ut se ostenderent mundo. Et iverunt aliqui eorum versus Romanam curiam, aliqui ad Sanctum Iacobum, aliqui ad Sanctum Michaelum Archangelum, aliqui vero ad partes ultramarinas.”
55. R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215–c. 1515* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 165–8.

56. See Mornese, *Fra Dolcino*, 74, where Mornese contends that Segarelli was not a reformer. See also, Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 57–65, esp. 59, where he argues that by adopting Franciscan attire, Segarelli was attempting to give the Apostles the outward appearance of an established order, signifying an effort to become legitimate and orthodox by association.
57. *Cronica*, 1/377.3–13, 396: “[Robertus] dixit quod, cum consuluissent magistrum Albertum Parmensem, qui erat unus de septem notaries Romane curie, quid facerent de rectore, commisit negotium istud abbati monasterii Ordinis Cistercii quod est in episcopatu Parmensi et appellatur Fontana Viva. Ille vero breviter se expedivit de facto eorum, dicens quod non facerent loca conventualia nec congregarentur in domibus, sed irent per mundum, sicut inchoaverant, portando capillos longos et barbam prolixam et caput denudatum et mantellum circa scapulas involutum, et quod in diversis domibus hospitarentur.”
58. *Cronica*, 1/384.17–23, 404: “Hunc faciebat instrui ut postea instructus Ordinem fratrum Minorum intraret. Huic fratri iste nepos sermones scribebat, ex quibus IIII vel V cordétenus didicit. Cumque non reciperetur ita subito, ut volebat, in congregationem, qui se dicunt Apostolos esse non sunt, se recipi fecit. Quem etiam sermones quos didicerat faciebant in ecclesiis cathedralibus predicare. Et plures eorum scilicet istorum, imperabant silentium, et puer loquebatur populo congregato.”
59. *Cronica*, 1/386.15–36, 406: “Alia vice, cum habitarem Ravenne, fecerunt isti Apostoli predictum puerum predicare in ecclesia Ursiana, que est archiepiscopalis ecclesia civitatis Ravenne. Et tanta fuit utriusque sexus populi festinatio et discursus, quod vix unus aliam expectabat . . . Et ita, plena erat iam ecclesia Ursiana, quando pervenit [Giullietta] illuc, quod non potuit habere locum nisi forinsecus extra ianuam. Et tamen usque, adeo grandis est ecclesia cathedralis, quod IIII alas habet, excepta nave maiori, que tenet medietatem.”
60. *Cronica*, 1/384.24–7, 404: “Cumque apud Ferariam frater Bonaventura de Yseo predicaret quadam die in loco fratrum Minorum, vidit quosdam de auditoribus suis subito surgere et festinanter currere, et miratus est vehementer.”
61. *Cronica*, 1/384.29–33, 404: “Cum autem inquireret quare sic festinanter recederent, a residentibus dictum est: ‘Quia unus puerulus de Apostolis in matrice ecclesia Beati Georgii ad predicandum se preparat, ubi populus congregatur, et ideo preoccupat quilibet currere ut locum habere possit.’”
62. *Cronica*, 1/404.31–2, 426: “Sed miseria et pigritia episcoporum permittit eos [Apostolos] per mundum infructuose vagari.”
63. *Cronica*, 1/386.26–30, 406: “Hunc etiam puerum isti, qui se dicunt Apostolos, circumducebant per civitates et faciebant eum in ecclesiis episcopalibus predicare. Et fiebat populi magnus concursus et utriusque sexus congregatio, et admiratio copiosa.”
64. For more information on Guido Putagio, see Chapter 7.
65. *Cronica*, 1/391.4–5, 411: “[Apostolos] ducebant se cum dominam Tripiam, sororem fratris Guidonis Putágii.” For their relationship to Roland, see *Cronica*, 1/378.23–5, 398: “dominus Rolandus Putagius, qui erat germanus consanguineus suus, potestas Bononiensium erat.”

66. Obizzo Sanvitale, *Sorores Apostolorum* (5 August 1269), *Archivio di Stato di Parma, Diplomatico: Documenti Privati*, 41.2488: "Cum igitur sorores dicte apostolorum de Parma que relicte seculi vanitatibus domino famulantur oppresse paupertate in vite necessariis sufficere sibi non possint universitatem vestram rogamus in domino attentius et hortamur quatenus cum lator presencium ipsarum sororum nuntius ad vos venerit pro elemosinis postulandis vos ecclesiarum prelati et rectores benigne recipiatis ipsum in domibus vestris et caritative tractetis populum vestrum ad benefaciendum eidem devotius inducendo ut per hec et alia bona que vos et ipsi domino inspirante feceritis vitam mereamini consequi sempiternam. Nos enim de omnipotentis dei misericordia et beate marie virginis omniumque sanctorum eius meritis confisi omnibus vere penitentibus et confessis qui dictis sororibus ac ipsarum servicio pias elemosinas erogaverint quadraginta dies de iniuncta sivi penitencia misericorditer in domino relaxamus presentibus post minime valituris." See also Ferdinand Bernini, "Apostoli e Flagellanti in Parma nel duecento secondo nuovi Documenti," *Religio 11* (1935), 352–6; Brian R. Carniello, *Gerard Segarelli and the Order of Apostles at Parma and Bologna: Mendicant Rivalry and Heresy in Thirteenth-Century Lombardy* (MA thesis, Western Michigan University, 1996), 20–1.
67. See Carniello, *Gerard Segarelli and the Order of Apostles at Parma and Bologna*, 40–6.
68. *Cronica*, 2/819.27–820.1, 846: "Item eodem millesimo, post predicta paucis diebus elapsis, venerunt per eandem stratem publicam XII iuencule cum mantellis circa scapulas involute, que se dicebant sorores Appostolissas esse hominum supra dictorum, et ibant Parmam ad videndum fratrem Ghirardinum Segalellum."
69. See R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), 309–18; Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 75–88; Brenda M. Bolton, "Mulieres sanctae." In *Women in Medieval Society*, Susan Mosher Stuard (ed.) (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976), 141–58.
70. Bolton, *Mulieres Sanctae*, 143–4.
71. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 182.
72. Bolton, *Mulieres Sanctae*, 142–3.
73. See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 160–1; Euan Cameron, *Waldenses*, 31–2; 73–4.
74. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 181–2. Lambert also argues that the beguines offered an occupation and support for women who could otherwise not "find a husband," 181.
75. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 112. Lambert notes that this equality began to change toward the gradual exclusion of women after the end of the Albigensian crusade in 1229 as the Cathars were slowly eradicated. See also Lambert, *The Cathars*, 75–80.
76. Emphasizing the active role of women in these apostolic movements, Grundmann has noted that these women renounced their property and social status "not as a result of compulsion and need, but as a result of free choice." See Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 85.
77. Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 46–7.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6: RIVALRY AND SLANDER

1. Parts of this chapter appear in a different format in “Piety and pleasure: The Franciscans, the Order of Apostles and spiritual identity, 1260–1300.” In *Textual Pleasure in the Middle Ages: A Casebook*, Scott Troyan and Robin Hass Birky (eds) (New York: Routledge, forthcoming, 2012).
2. *Cronica*, 1/369.6–8, 388: “Illam etiam congregationem illorum ribaldorum et porcariorum et stultorum et ignobilium qui se dicunt Apostolos esse et non sunt, sed sunt synagoga Sathane.”
3. *Cronica*, 1/372.17–19, 391: “Et ita processu temporis dixerunt multis diebus sui sequaces, cum homines rurales et ydiote existerent.”
4. *Cronica*, 1/382.5–12, 401–2: “De deformi et inhonesta stultitia istorum ribaldorum . . . congregatio stultorum et bestialium ribaldorum, qui volunt vivere de labore et sudore aliorum.”
5. *Cronica*, 1/426.15–19, 449: “Revera ita accidit istis Apostolis fratris Ghirardini Segalelli, qui se Apostolos nominant, cum sint ribaldi et deceptores, qui ligonem vitant et laborare recusant, quibus vaccas et porcinos custodire magis incomberet sue purgare latrines aut alia vilia opera exercere vel saltem agriculture insistere.” See also 1/373.29–1/374.2, 393: “[Apostolos] nec consilia nec bona exempla dabant, quia . . . per omnia ignorantes erant et penitus inepti . . . quia nec consuetudinem habebant . . . sed errant porcarii et vaccarum custodies.”
6. *Cronica*, 1/373.29: “quia nec consuetudinem habebant.”
7. *Cronica*, 1/406.31–5, 428: “Item tales predicant non in congregatione, sed in dispersione Ghirardini Segalelli, qui . . . si essent in Ordine Fratrum Minorum, vix permetterentur mensis ministrare vel lavare scutellas seu hostiatim ire pro pane.”
8. *Cronica*, 1/369.20–2, 388: “venit quidam iuvenis natione Parmensis, de vili progenie ortus, illitteratus et laycus, ydiota et stultus, cui nomen Gerardinus Segalellus.”
9. *Cronica*, 1/369.23–5, 388: “Qui cum non exaudiretur ab eis, tota die, quando poterat, morabatur in ecclesia fratrum et cogitabat quod postea stultizando implevit.”
10. *Cronica*, 1/372.15–19, 391: “Verumtamen verbum Domini frequenter dicebat: “Penitencágite!” (Nesciebat enim exprimere, ut dicere: “Penitentiam agite”).
11. See above; *Cronica*, 1/371.13–19, 390: “Et stans in media via, ex nimia simplicitate transeuntibus clara voce dicebat: ‘Ite et vos in vineam meam!’ Et qui cognoscebant eum, reputabant eum fatuum, scientes quod nullam vineam ibi habebat. Montanarii, vero, qui eum non cognoscebant, ingrediebantur vineam, versus quam manum extenderat, et comedebant uvas non suas, credentes sibi hoc a proprio vinee domino imperatum.”
12. Merlo, *Salimbene e gli Apostolici*, 9.
13. *Cronica*, 1/376.23–9, 396: “[F]rater Ghirardinus Segalellus, qui fuit primus eorum, nunquam voluit se intromittere de dominio congregationis sue, ut eorum prelati existeret, quamquam rogaretur ab eis, sed dicebate eis quod quilibet bene faceret, quia anima laborantis laborabit sibi [Prov. 16.26], et quod unusquisque propriam mercedem recipiet secundum suum laborem [1 Cor. 3.8], et quod unusquisque onus suum portabit [Gal. 6.5], et quod unusquisque pro se rationem reddet Deo [Rom. 14.12].”

14. Mt. 19.21; 23–4. In the same chapter, lines 28–30, Jesus again stresses the importance of renunciation by stating that all those who have left their families, houses or fields to follow him, will “inherit eternal life.”
15. *Cronica*, 1/383.16–18, 403: “Verba eius scurrilia, turpia, vana et inhonesta atque ociosa et risu digna magis propter fatuitatem et stoliditatem quam propter maliciam.”
16. Mornese, *Fra Dolcino*, 73; Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 46–7.
17. Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 14. For a fuller discussion of these terms, see Grundmann, “Litteratus—illiteratus, Der Wandel einer Bildungsnorm vom Altertum zum Mittelalter,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 40, 1958, 1–65.
18. Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 14. For the biblical precedent, see Acts 4.13.
19. *Cronica*, 1/370.2–10: “Et habens denariorum sacculum non dispersit et dedit pauperibus nec congregationi pauperum affabilem se fecit, sed, vocatis ribaldis, qui ibi prope in platea ludebant, sparsit inter illos . . . Collegerunt itaque valde cito ribaldi denarios illos et iverunt et luserunt ad taxillos et isto audiente qui dederant, blasphemaverunt Deum viventem.”
20. *Cronica*, 1/371.1–10, 390: “Igitur de Ghirardino Segalello, qui fuit istorum principium, sciendum quod filio Dei voluit similari. Nam fecit se circumcidi, quod est contra Apostolum . . . Item in cunabilis iacuit fasciis involutus et lac et mammas suxit cuiusdam nescie mulieris.”
21. Baird, *Chronicle*, x.
22. *Cronica*, 1/393.15–21: “[D]e Apostolis fratris Ghirardini Segalelli . . . ‘Nunc ergo expugnemus illos et tollamus de hominibus memoriam eorum.’”
23. The issue of chastity was also associated with Robert of Arbrissel, who had a “notorious” inclination toward the salvation of prostitutes, if one is to believe his detractors. See R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1987), 94–8; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 41; Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 234.
24. *Cronica*, 1/371.20–5, 390: “Post hec, cum hospitaretur apud aliquam mulierculam viduam, filiam nubilem et speciosam habentem, dicebat sibi a Domino revelatum quod cum illa puella debebat illa nocta nudus cum nuda in eodem lecto dormire, ut probaret si castitatem servare posset necne. Consentiebat mater reputans se beatam, et puella minime hoc negabat.”
25. See Wayne A. Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 130–49; Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 33–64; 213–40; Teresa M. Shaw, *The Burden of the Flesh: Fasting and Sexuality in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), *passim*.
26. For biblical precedents on pleasure, see Lk. 8.14, 1 Tim. 5.6, 2 Tim. 3.4, and Tit. 3.3; for Paul on spirit and body distinctions, see esp. Rom. 7–8 and Gal. 5.19ff; for general spirit/body distinctions, see Mt. 26.41, Mk. 14.38, 1 Cor. 15.50, and Jn. 3.6; 6.63; for the conflict between wealth and salvation, see esp. Mt. 19, Mk. 10, and Lk. 1.53. The best treatment of the issues surrounding carnality, spirituality, and renunciation remains Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. For a concise discussion of Paul’s elevation of the spiritual over carnal, see Brown, 47–9. See

Daniel Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 123–4, regarding the connection between poverty and spirituality.

27. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) is, perhaps, one of the most significant early Christian writers, especially in terms of his contributions to later, especially medieval, conceptions of original sin. Three of Augustine's key works that deal with the body, carnality, and spirituality are *Confessiones*, *De Civitate Dei*, and *Opus Imperfectum contra Julianum*. For a thorough biography, see Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967). See also, Brown, *The Body and Society*, 387ff and 500ff. Discussion of Augustine's merging of the concepts of original sin, carnal pleasure, and enslavement can be found in Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 99–100, 105–15.
28. See Chapter 5, n. 38. See also Merlo, *Eretici ed Eresie Medievali*, 103–4.
29. *Cronica*, 1/418.1–5, 439: "Quod multi ribaldi et seductores acceperunt habitum Segalelli, ut facilius scelera operentur. Sic ad litteram inter Apostolos Ghirardini Segalelli ingrediuntur ribaldi et seductores et deceptores et latrones et fornicatores."
30. *Cronica*, 1/374.5–6, 393: "[T]ota die discurrebant [Apostolos] per civitatem mulieres videndo." See also 1/389.30–31, 410: "Sed isti stulti qui se dicunt Apostolos tota die discurrunt per civitates mulieres videndo."
31. *Cronica*, 1/389.16, 409: "Apostoli, autem, non Christi, sed Ghirardini Segalelli, male servant castitatem. Nam, ut michi dixerunt, quando vadunt per mundum, ad meretrices declinant et in domibus in quibus hospitantur, si a lascivis mulieribus sollicitantur ad peccatum sive ad peccandum, consentiunt eis, et parva est pugna."
32. Merlo, *Salimbene e gli Apostolici*, 12–13.
33. *Cronica*, 1/390.17–19, 410: "Apostoli Ghirardini Segalelli masculi in masculos turpitudinem operantur, maxime senes cum iunioribus, qui ingrediuntur ad eos, ut dixerunt michi." See also 1/418.5–6, 439–40: "[Apostolos] multa turpia cum mulieribus faciunt nec non et cum pueris, postea redeunt ad ribaldariam."
34. John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 286. For Boswell's complete discussion of the connection between homosexuality and heresy, see 283–6. See also Robert Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), 20–5, for a discussion of the alleged connection between fornication and heresy.
35. Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, 284 and 286.
36. *Cronica*, 1/421.34–422.2, 444: "Et deinceps tam cardinales Romane curie quam summi pontifices Ordinem beati Francisci totis viribus dilexerunt, cognoscentes et oculata fide videntes quod fratres Minores utiles sunt Ecclesie et mundo dati sunt ad salutem."
37. *Cronica*, 1/366.24–7, 385: "quia nos et fratres Predicatores docuimus omnes homines mendicare; et quilibet assumit sibi caputium et vult facere unam regulam mendicantem. Isti multiplicati sunt subito."
38. *Cronica*, 1/369.31–3, 389: "quicumque volunt noviter congregationem aliquam facere, ab Ordine beati Francisci aliquid semper usurpant."
39. *Cronica*, 1/419, 9–14, 441: "Si sic faceret Gerardinus Segallellus, scilicet audiret verba atque consilia, rediret ad ligonem cum rusticis suis et custodiret porcos et vaccas,

- et melius faceret quam eundo stultizando per mundum et pauperes homines defraudando de helemosinis suis et fastidium Christiano populo inferendo.”
40. *Cronica*, 1/374.27–9, 394: “Quales sunt isti, qui se dicunt Apostolos esse et tota die ociosi, tota die vagabundi per civitates et per mundum discurrunt nec operari volunt, sed vivere ex aliorum sudore et labore.” See also 1/374.6–7, 393: “reliquum tempus expendebant in ocio et nichil operabantur” and 1/369.16–17, 388: “[T]ota die vagabundi. Nam non laborant neque orant.”
 41. *Cronica*, 1/418.27–419.3, 440–1: “[De clericis] qui cum optime in Ecclesia prebendati sint, tenentur facere illud offitium propter quod prebendas acceperunt, scilicet predicare, missas cantare, confessiones peccatorum audire, consilia salutifera dare, pro vivis et defunctis orare, sanctam vitam habere et conversationem sanctam et honestam omnibus intuentibus demonstrare . . . Et tamen ista non faciunt, vel quia nolunt, quia potius volunt sequi consolationes mundanas et carnales, vel certe quia non habent scientiam, unde velle possint.”
 42. *Cronica*, 1/369.10–14, 388: “Quia nec utiles sunt ad predicandum nec ad ecclesiasticum officium decantandum nec ad missas celebrandas nec ad confessiones audiendas nec ad legendum in scolis nec ad consilia danda nec etiam pro benefactoribus exorandum;” 1/392.23–26, 413: “Et nota quod ista tria de quibus supra diximus omnium religionem sunt fundamentum, sine quibus nulli religioso poterit esse salus; immo qui aliquo istorum caruerit, nequaquam religiosus poterit nuncupari.” For similar statements on the uselessness of the Apostles see also 1/373.26–30, 393, 1/400.24–31, 422 and 1/404.9–13, 426.
 43. I would like to thank Alan E. Bernstein for suggesting the eschatological implications of these terms.
 44. J. C. De Haan, *La Setta degli Apostolici e i suoi Capi*, 50. De Haan also notes that despite this evidence, it is uncertain how widespread these activities were.
 45. *Cronica*, 1/369.14–17, 388: “Ad quid ergo Ecclesie Dei deserviant et populo Christiano utiles sunt, videre non possum.” See also Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 39–40.
 46. Merlo, *Salimbene e gli Apostolici*, 20.
 47. For more on ecclesiastical revenue in Italy, especially in the century prior to Salimbene, see Maureen Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950–1150* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993) and Catherine E. Boyd, *Tithes and Parishes in Medieval Italy: The Historical Roots of a Modern Problem* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952).
 48. For further discussion on the transformation of the Franciscan Order, especially its aristocratization, see Merlo, *Salimbene e gli Apostolici*, 6–7.
 49. Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, 1. For further discussion of the issues facing the Franciscan Order in 1257 and the later *usus pauper* debate, see Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, 1–37. For more on the crisis facing the Franciscans in the second half of the thirteenth century, see Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 28.
 50. *Cronica*, 2/903.1–17, 930–1: “[I]n episcopatu Bononiensi, cum quidam iuvenis dives, qui habebat patrem et matrem, noviter duxisset uxorem, primo sero, antequam uxorem cognosceret, tres ribaldos receipt hospitio ex his qui se dicunt Apostolos esse non sunt, qui

suaserunt iuveni ne uxorem cognosceret nec cum ea in eodem lecto prima nocte dormiret, nisi quando dicerent ei. Hoc autem ideo dicebant, quia volebant iuvenem prevenire atque decipere et prius cum uxore eius dormire, sicut factum est, quia omnes tres illa nocte iverunt ad lectum eius, unus post alium, facto modico intervallo, et cognoverunt eam. Cum autem Quarta vice iuvenis sponsus eius vellet eam cognoscere, mirata uxor eius dixit ei: 'Tribus vicibus in hac nocte carnaliter mecum fuisti et adhuc vis agere opus istud?' Tunc cognovit iuvenis ab istis ribaldis se esse deceptum, et fecit eos capi et conquestus est potestati, et ducti sunt ad suspendium."

51. *Chronicon Parmense*, 67.10–11: "eodem anno quatuor heretici, duo masculi et due femine, propter heresim combusti fuerunt per commune Parme, et qui se dicebant de ordine Apostolorum."
52. *Chronicon Parmense*, 67.12–15: "Frater Gerardus Segharellus, qui dicebatur dominus fratrum Apostolorum, examinatus et inventus culpabilis in multis heresiis et enormis delictis, condepnatus fuit per dominum Oppeçonem parmensem episcopum perpetuo carcere puniendus."
53. Brian R. Carniello, *Gerard Segarelli and the Order of Apostles at Parma and Bologna: Mendicant Rivalry and Heresy in Thirteenth-Century Lombardy* (MA thesis, Western Michigan University, 1996), 37–94.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7: DESCENT INTO HERESY

1. Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 2 vols (Brepols, 1998), 1/376.23–9, 396: "frater Ghirardinus Segalellus, qui fuit primus eorum, nunquam voluit se intromittere de dominio congregationis sue, ut eorum prelatus existeret, quamquam rogaretur ab eis."
2. *Cronica*, 1/376.23–9, 396: "sed dicebat eis quod quilibet bene faceret, quia anima laborantis laborabit sibi [Prov. 16.26], et quod unusquisque propriam mercedem recipiet secundum suum laborem [1 Cor. 3.8], et quod unusquisque onus suum portabit [Gal. 6.5], et quod unusquisque pro se rationem reddet Deo [Rom. 14.12]."
3. For more on the distinction between these titles, see David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, 4–7; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, 2–5; Rosalind B. Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government: Elias to Bonaventure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 56–9.
4. David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, 5.
5. Despite the relative stability of the Franciscans, many came to see the formation of a hierarchical structure as a violation of the simple standards and individualism set forth by Francis himself, and this disagreement contributed to the later rift between the Conventuals and the Spirituals. For more on the division between the two groups, see especially Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, 1–65; 111–36; and *passim*.
6. *Cronica*, 1/377.15–18, 396: "Guido Putagius, qui fuit concivis meus, socius et amicus, cum intrasset eorum Ordinem et vidisset quod frater Ghirardinus Segalellus non intromitteret se de regimine, viriliter assumpsit sibi dominium, quod tenuit annis multis."

7. *Cronica*, 1/377.22–4, 397: “nimis pompaticè incedebat cum multis equitaturis et faciebat largas expensas et multa convivia, sicut legati vel cardinales Romane curie facere consueverunt.”
8. *Cronica*, 1/377.24–7, 397: “[Guido] displicuit suis et fecerunt sibi aliud caput, quemdam fratrem Matheum in Marchia Anconitana. Facta est itaque divisio inter eos.”
9. *Cronica*, 1/377.32–378.16, 397: “facta est igitur longa concertatio inter eos; et cum essent in civitate Faventie, percusserunt se mutuo, scilicet Apostoli fratris Mathei cum Apostolis fratris Guidonis Putágii, et dederunt malum exemplum secularibus Faventinis. . . . Fuit autem causa istius conflictus et percussiois huiusmodi. Frater Guido Putágius habitabat Faventie in quadam ecclesia parvula . . . et erant cum eo de suis valde pauci fratres et frater Ghirardinus Segalellus. Visum est itaque Apostolis de Marchia quod, si haberent fratrem Ghirardinum Segalellum, qui primus eorum fuerat, victoriam obtinerent. Et ideo, quia voluerunt eum violenter rapere et in Marchiam secum ducere, sed non potuerunt, se mutuo percusserunt.”
10. See G. Mollat, *Manuel de l’Inquisiteur*, 2 vols (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1964) for the full text. Mollat’s edition is an updated version of C. Douais’ *Practica Inquisitionis heretice pravitatis, auctore Bernardo Guidonis* (Paris, 1886). For Mollat’s discussion of the dating of the *Practica*, see esp. xi–v, where he notes that the later composition date of 1322 may be due to Gui’s note concerning a then-current case against a member of the Order of Apostles. All references to this work by Gui, hereafter cited as *Practica*, are based on Mollat’s edition.
11. On Gui and his work, see James Given, “A medieval inquisitor at work: Bernard Gui, 3 March 1308 to 19 June 1323.” In *Portraits of Medieval and Renaissance Living: Essays in Memory of David Herlihy*, Samuel K. Cohn, Jr and Steven A. Epstein (eds) (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1996), 207–32; Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages*, Arthur Goldhammer (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 37–70; Antoine Dondaine, “Le manuel de l’inquisiteur, 1230–1330.” In *Les Hérésies et l’Inquisition, XIIe–XIIIe siècles: Documents et études*, Antoine Dondaine (ed.) (Hampshire, Great Britain: Variorum, 1990), 85–194.
12. For a more detailed discussion of both Gui and the *Practica*, see “Bernard Gui’s description of heresies.” In *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 373–5.
13. *Practica*, 5.3.2, 86: “[I]lle exuit se omnibus vestimentis suis in signum expoliationis et renuntiat omnibus que possidet in signum perfectionis evangelice paupertatis.”
14. *Practica*, 5.3.2, 86: “Et ex tunc non debet recipere peccuniam nec habere nec portare, sed debet vivere de elemosinis que sibi gratis et sponte ab aliis offerentur, nichil in crastinum reservando.”
15. In his section entitled “General Questions for the Pseudo-Apostles” (Interrogatoria Generalia ad Pseudo-Apostolos Facienda), Gui instructs his readers to ask questions of the accused about his or her dress, in order to determine if they are indeed members of the Order of Apostles, *Practica*, 5.3.6, 98–9: “de habitu quem portant et de forma eiusdem qui videtur esse habitus alicuius religionis, quando et ubi talem habitum assumpserunt

et quem ordinem tenent et si quam regulam profitentur et si unquam ordo verborum quem tenent et talis habitus quem portant ab ecclesia Romana fuit approbatus et si sciunt aliquos alios qui talem ordinem teneat et habitum talem portent. Item, si aliquem vel aliquos monuerunt vel induxerunt ad talem habitum assumendum vel portandum vel ad similem ritum et modum vivendi tenendum et ad similia faciendum et quos et quot et quare. Item, de modo et forma recipiendi ad dictum ordinem vel habitum assumendi.”

16. *Practica*, 5.3.8, 104: “quam ex habitu quem portant in aliquo specialem et distinctum quasi sit alicuius religionis habitus singularis, cum tamen ipsi non sint de aliqua religione per ecclesiam approbata, immo potius reprobata, et omnis habitus sub forma religionis alicuius non approbatus sit interdictus et prohibitus ad portandum, ne qui religiosus non est religiosus ex habitu videatur.”
17. *Practica*, 5.3.4, 94–5: “Unde dicunt: ‘Vigilate et orate, quia hoc est bonum pro anima.’ Item, dicunt ‘Pater noster’ et ‘Ave Maria’ et ‘Credo in Deum’ alta voce. Item, cantant eundo per villas, aliquando in plateis, vel ubi inveniunt audientes: ‘Penitentiam agite, appropinquabit enim regnum celorum’, et de apostolis: ‘Ecce ego vos mitto sicut oves in medio luporum’, item: ‘Non turbetur cor vestrum neque formidet’ cantando. Item, cantant ‘Salve, regina’ et quosdam alios cantus.”
18. *Practica*, 5.3.4, 96: “Et comedunt in carreriis publice in aliqua mensa sibi ibidem apposita de illis que sibi tunc apportantur.”
19. *Practica*, 5.3.4, 96: “Et illa que supersunt de pane et vino et de aliis que oblata sunt ibidem eis, quando inde surgunt, nichil recipiunt nec secum ferunt, set dimittunt ibidem in signum quo sint perfecti pauperes Christi, quasi non cogitent de crastino et quasi non habeant domum neque mansionem; et isto modo mendicant victum suum.”
20. See Chapter 6, n. 39.
21. *Acta S. Officii Bononie ab anno 1291 usque ad annum 1310*, Lorenzo Paolini and Raniero Orioli (eds) (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1982), 1.77, 111: “dixit quod predicti appellant se et faciunt se appellari et vocari pauperes Christi, sive minimos, et consueverant appellari apostoli”; 1.78, 112: “Interrogatus si audivit ab illis, qui dicunt se vel faciunt dici pauperes Christi sive minimos seu apostolos.”
22. *Practica*, 5.3.4, 94: “Modus quoque persuadendi et informandi ipsorum in principio, et maxime quando publice se ostentant, communiter talis est. Dicunt enim quedam que videntur aperte laudabilia, ut sic attrahant et alliciant audientes.”
23. *Practica*, 5.3.4, 96: “[E]t pretendunt exterius quedam signa devotionis ad Deum, que omnia prima facie videntur auditoribus bona et pia; et specialiter conantur ut appareant exterius hominibus penitentes et vitam perfectam agentes.” Emphasis mine.
24. Such accusations of feigned sanctity had plagued earlier poverty movements, such as the Waldensians, claiming that the outward appearance of piety was part of their deception to seduce the uninformed laity. See translation of “The Passau Anonymous.” In *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, Edward Peters (ed.) (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980), 153.
25. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 92: “quod perfectior vita est vivere sine voto quam cum voto.”
26. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 92: “quod pro nulla causa nec in aliquo casu debet homo iurare nisi pro articulis fidei vel preceptis Dei.”

27. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 92: "Et si de aliis requirantur, licet eis sine peccato mentiri et veritatem sue secte negare ore, dummodo teneant eam in corde, ad hoc ut evadant potestatem inquisitorum."
28. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 92: "Et quantumcumque iurent dicere veritatem coram prelatiis sue inquisitoribus, non tenentur respondere de aliquo alio nec revelare doctrinam suam seu errores suos nec tenentur defendere verbo, set semper corde tenere."
29. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 92–4: "set debent respondere inficiando, vel negando, seu palliando, quocumque modo possint pertransire."
30. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 94: "Si tamen non possent mortem evadere, tunc in tali casu aperte debent profiteri et defendere in omnibus et per omnia predictam doctrinam suam et mori in ea patienter et constanter et nullatenus aliquos de sociis suis vel credentibus revelare."
31. See n. 18.
32. A similar situation occurred among the early Waldensians, where those who stayed under the direct influence of Peter Valdes, the Lyonists, tended to remain much more moderate in their understanding of the implications of the *vita apostolica*. The Lombards, at first geographically removed from the Lyonists, also became ideologically separated, and much more anticlerical, in part because Valdes' ideas of poverty developed among them without his oversight. See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 76–85; Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 17–20.
33. *Practica*, 5.3.2, 86: "in signum perfectionis evangelice paupertatis." See also 5.3.2, 86: "se esse in statu apostolice et evangelice paupertatis et perfectionis."
34. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "dicunt quod ipsi soli qui dicuntur apostoli de predicta secta seu congregatione sunt ecclesia Dei et sunt in illa perfectione in qua fuerunt primi apostoli Christi."
35. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "quod ipsi qui dicunt esse apostolos Christi, et nulli alii, habent potestatem quam habuit a Deo beatus Petrus apostolus."
36. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "quam sectam sue ordinem vocant congregationem spirituales a Deo missam et electam."
37. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "quod tota illa potestas spiritualis quam Christus dedit Ecclesie ab initio translata est in sectam illorum qui se dicunt apostolos seu de ordine apostolorum."
38. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "de predicto Gerardo quod ipse fuerit planta Dei pullilans in radice fidei, in qua Deus cepit reducere ecclesiam suam ad perfectionem et vitam et statum et paupertatem ecclesie primitive, in illo statu in quo Christus commisit ecclesiam beato Petro apostolo."
39. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 90: "quod nullus potest salvari aut intrare in regnum celorum nisi sit de statu seu ordine ipsorum [Apostolorum]."
40. *Practica*, 5.3.2, 86: "non promittit obedientiam alicui homini mortali set soli Deo, et tunc reputat se esse in statu apostolice et evangelice paupertatis et perfectionis et soli Deo et nulli homini esse subjectum, sicut fuerunt apostoli subjecti Christo et nulli alii." Emphasis mine.
41. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "Et ideo dicunt se non teneri alicui homini obedire, nec summo pontifici nec alteri, quia eorum regula, quam dicunt fuisse immediate a Christo, libera est et perfectissima vita."

42. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "quod nec papa nec aliquis alius potest eis precipere quod deserant statum illum seu vitam tante perfectionis. Item, quod papa nec aliquis alius potest eos excommunicare."
43. *Practica*, 5.3.7, 102: "[Examinentur] si credunt quod sit ecclesia Dei et quod habeat illam potestatem ligandi et solvendi et excommunicandi quam Christus dedit et tradidit beato Petro apostolo et . . . si credunt aut reputant se esse subjectos romano pontifici, ita quod ei teneantur obedire et quod per eum possint excommunicari et per alios prelatos Romane ecclesie, quamvis ipsi fecerint votum soli Deo et non homini." These beliefs that the Roman Church as a whole, and the pope in particular, lacked any power or authority over Christians were not exclusive to the Apostles. Such beliefs, and the inquisitorial questions relating to them, were common to the Waldensians and Cathars, among others. See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 66–87; 105–46.
44. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 86: "dogmatizant quod tota auctoritas a domino Jhesu Christo collata dudum ecclesie Romane est omnino evacuata et iam cessavit propter malitiam prelatorum."
45. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 90: "quod nullus papa Romane ecclesie potest aliquem absolvere nisi esset ita sanctus sicut fuit beatus Petrus apostolus, vivendo in omnimodo paupertate sine proprio et in humilitate."
46. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 90: "[Papa Romane ecclesie] non faciendo guerras nec aliquem persequendo, set permittendo vivere quemlibet in sua libertate."
47. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 86: "quod ecclesia Romana, quam tenent papa et cardinales et prelati et clerici et religiosi, non est ecclesia Dei, set reprobata ecclesia sine fructu."
48. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 90: "quod omnes prelati Romane ecclesie, tam majores quam minores, a tempore sancti Silvestri, postquam declinaverunt a modo vivendi priorum sanctorum, sunt prevaricatores et seductores . . . quod omnes ordines religiosorum et sacerdotum et deachonorum et subdeachonorum et prelatorum sunt ad fidei catholice detrimentum. Item, quod laici non debent nec tenentur dare decimas alicui sacerdoti seu prelato Romane ecclesie qui non sit in tanta perfectione et in tanta paupertate in quanta fuerunt primi apostoli."
49. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 90: "sunt prevaricatores et seductores, excepto fratre Petro de Marrone, qui fuit papa Celestinus appellatus." Celestine V was elected pope on July 5, 1294 and abdicated on December 13 of the same year. See also Walter Capezalli, *Celestino V e i suoi tempi: Realtà spirituale e realtà politica: Atti del 4. Convegno storico internazionale, L'Aquila, 26–27 agosto 1989* (L'Aquila, Italy: Centro Celestiniano, 1999); *Associazione Culturale "Gli Argonauti", Aspetti della Spiritualità ai tempi di Celestino V: Atti dei Convegni, Ferentino, 23 Febbraio e 21 Maggio, 1992* (Ferentino, Italy: Casamari, 1992).
50. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 86: "quod ecclesia Romana est illa Babilon meretrix magna de qua scribit Johannes in Apocalipsi, que apostatavit a fide Christi." See Rev. 17.5.
51. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 90: "quod omnes qui persecuntur eos peccant et sunt in statu dampnationis et perditionis."
52. *Practica*, 5.3.6, 98: "In primis itaque interrogentur de sua patria ac parentibus, unde fuerunt aut traxerunt originem et quare et quando de suis partibus recesserunt et ad

partes tales venerunt et cum quibus et quantum steterunt in remotis partibus et in quibus villis et cum aibus maxime conversati sunt in eisdem.”

53. *Practica*, 5.3.4, 94: “premittunt in persuasionibus suis apud laicos quemcumque possunt dicere et persuadere de mala vita prelatorum et clericorum et religiosorum et dicunt quod prelati et clerici et religiosi persecuntur eos ex invidia ex eo quod dicunt et docent veritatem.”

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8: APOCALYPTIC CATASTROPHE

1. Bernard Gui, *De secta illorum qui se dicunt esse de ordine apostolorum*, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, L. A. Muratori (ed.) (Citta di Castello, 1907) vol. 9, part 5, 19. Hereafter cited as *De Secta*. The surviving manuscript is located in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana (Milan), A.129 in f., ff.129r–150r, and has not been translated into English. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
2. Throughout this work I use the term “apocalyptic” in the following sense: a belief in an immanent, purging cataclysm foretold by prophetic signs. The immediacy of the coming events distinguishes apocalypticism from eschatology, a similar belief in a divinely ordained and prophesied end of human history, but one that is not necessarily immediate. I am indebted to Alan E. Bernstein for suggesting this formulation.
3. These letters of Dolcino exist only insofar as the Dominican inquisitor, Bernard Gui, copied their contents into his own history of the Apostles, *De Secta Pseudo-Apostolorum*. See n.1 above. In addition to Gui’s *De Secta*, the primary sources for the study of the history of the Apostles under Dolcino include another of Gui’s works, *Inquisitionis Heretice Pravitatis*, G. Mollat (ed.), *Manuel de l’Inquisiteur*, 2 vols (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1964), the anonymous *Historia Fratris Dulcini Heresiarche* (Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana), H. 80 in f., ff. 28r–47r (hereafter cited as *Historia*) and Benevenuti de Rambaldis de Imola’s, *Comentum super Dantis Aldigherij Comoedium*.
4. *De Secta*, 19.
5. *Historia*, f.29r: “quidam frater nomine Dulcinus, filius presbyteri Iulii de Tarecontano vallis Ossole diocesis Novariensis.”
6. The document consistently refers to Dolcino and his followers with a variety of pejorative adjectives and phrases. Just a few examples include: *Historia*, f.28r: “legenda nefandorum operum et malorum gestorum”; f.28r: “maledictum et pessimum heresiarcham”; f.28r: “cum suis perfidis sequacibus”; f.28r: “perfidus heresiarcha frater Dulcinus”; f.29v: “cum pestifera comitiva”; f.33v: “expellendi illos canes pestiferos.”
7. Raniero Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 95–104. See especially 96.
8. Benvenuto de Rambaldis de Imola, *Comentum*, v. 2, 332–63. For a discussion of the usefulness of Benvenuto’s commentary, see J. C. De Haan, “La setta degli apostolici e i suoi capi.” In *Fra Dolcino e gli Apostolici tra Eresia, Rivolta e Roghi*, Corrado Mornese and Gustavo Buratti (eds) (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2000), 54.
9. Benvenuto de Imola, *Comentum*, v. 3, 359. For more on the chronology of events immediately after Segarelli’s execution, in addition to Benvenuto, see Tavo Burat, “Dolcino e gli apostolici: La storia in breve.” In *Fra Dolcino e gli Apostolici*, Mornese and Buratti (eds)

- (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2000), 35–6 and the lengthy discussion in Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 103–14.
10. For Orioli's discussion of Longino, see Orioli, *Venit Perfidus Heresiarcha*, 93, esp. n. 23. For Margherita see, *Historia*, ff.42r; 43r–43v; *De Secta*, 22; Benevenuti de Imola, *Comentum*, v. 3, 361.
 11. For an analysis of the role of women in the Order of Apostles, under both Segarelli and Dolcino, including available biographical data, see Corrado Mornese, "Le donne nella rivoluzione apostolica." In *Fra Dolcino e gli Apostolici*, Mornese and Buratti (eds) (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2000), 190–202.
 12. It is possible that Segarelli knew something of Joachite prophecy, for the year in which he founded the Apostolici, 1260, was the prophesied year of the beginning of Joachim's third status, addressed below. See, for example, Joachim's *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.4, where the abbot calculates that the third and final status or spiritual renewal would begin 42 generations after Christ, or approximately 1260. Gerard of Borgo San Donnino, in his Introduction to the Eternal Gospel, claimed that the fabled third age of Joachim would begin in 1260. It is important to note that 1260 was a year full of noteworthy activity, for it also saw the rise of the Flagellant Movement at Perugia.
 13. Joachim of Fiore, "Letter to all faithful." In *Apocalyptic Spirituality, The Classics of Western Spirituality*, Bernard McGinn (trans.) (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 113.
 14. There is a large body of scholarly literature on Joachim of Fiore. This list of standard works on Joachim is by no means exhaustive. See Bernard McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985); Marjorie Reeves and Beatrice Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); and *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future* (London: S.P.C.K., 1976; rev. edn, Stroud: Sutton Publishers, 1999); Stephen E. Wessley, *Joachim of Fiore and Monastic Reform* (New York: American University Studies, 1990); Delno C. West and Sandra Zimdar-Swartz, *Joachim of Fiore: A Study in Spiritual Perception of History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983).
 15. This shortened account is taken from E. Randolph Daniel, *Abbot Joachim of Fiore: Liber de Concordia Novi ac Veteris Testamenti* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1983), xii–xv.
 16. For an extended treatment of the numerous groups influenced by Joachim's ideas, see Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages*, passim. (Hereafter cited as *Influence*.)
 17. Joachim of Fiore, *Letter to All Faithful*, 113.
 18. Joachim, "Expositio in apocalypsim." In *Visions of the End*, Bernard McGinn (trans.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 130. Hereafter cited as *Expositio*.
 19. Joachim of Fiore, *Liber de Concordia Novi ac Veteris Testamenti*, E. Randolph Daniel (ed.) (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1983), 2.1.10, 79 (hereafter cited as *Liber de Concordia*): "Igitur quia duo sunt quorum unus est ingenitus, alius genitus, condita sunt duo testamenta, quorum primum . . . specialiter pertinet ad Patrem, secundum ad Filium."

20. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.2, 62: “[U]tpote Abraham et Zacharias, Sara et Elisabeth, Isaac et Iohannes Baptista, Iacob et homo Christus Ihesus, duodecim patriarche et numeri eiusdem Apostoli, etsi quod simile quod totum ubicumque occurit, non pro sensu allegorico sed pro concordia duorum testamentorum facere.”
21. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.2, 62: “vivum unum esse Patrem ad quem specialiter pertinet vetus testamentum; unum dei Filium ad quem specialiter pertinet novum.”
22. Regarding the two Testaments, Joachim explains that there is “unum Spiritum Sanctum qui ab utroque procedit, ad quem specialiter spectat mysticus intellectus qui, sicut dictum est, a duobus procedit.” See *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.2, 62.
23. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.2, 64: “licet nec ibi quod ad spiritum nec hic deesse valeat quod ad carnem.”
24. L. Tondelli, M. Reeves, and B. Hirsch-Reich (eds), *Il Libro delle Figure dell’ Abate Gioachino da Fiore* (Turin, 1953), Plate XIb. (Hereafter cited as *Il Libro delle Figure*).
25. The Latin word status does not literally mean “epoch” but rather, “stage,” “level,” or “condition.” Joachim therefore extends these conditions not into a hierarchical distinction of qualities, but a chronological or developmental one, hence “stages” or “epochs.” Due to this complexity I use the Latin term, whose plural is the same as the singular. Thus I write of one status and three status. Using “statuses” might be clearer, but I am relying upon Joachim’s, and Dolcino’s, use of the Latin to maintain their implied nuances.
26. See *Expositio*, 133: “The first of the three status of which we speak was in the time of the Law when the people of the Lord served like a little child for a time under the elements of the world. They were not yet able to attain the freedom of the Spirit until he [Jesus] came.”
27. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.9, 75: “Habet ergo coniugatorum ordo imaginem Patris, quia sicut Pater ideo Pater est quia habet Filium, ita ordo coniugatorum nonnisi ad procreandos filios institutus est a deo.”
28. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.4, 66: “Aliud namque tempus fuit in quo vivebant homines secundum carnem, hoc est usque ad Christum, cuius initiatio facta est in Adam.”
29. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.9, 75: “Sicut enim sanguis medius est inter carnem et animam, ita ordo clericorum medius est inter coniugatos et monachos.”
30. *Expositio*, 133: “The second status was under the Gospel and remains until the present with freedom in comparison to the past but not with freedom in comparison to the future.”
31. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.9, 75: “Habet et clericorum ordo imaginem Filii, qui est verbum Patris, quia ad hoc constitutus est et ipse ut loquatur et doceat populum viam Domini et ostendat ei continue legitima dei sui.”
32. Due to Joachim’s keen interest in maintaining the integrity of the Trinity, each status was intertwined with the other two, thus explaining the beginning of a status within a previous one.
33. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.9, 75: “[U]nde et spiritualis dictus est quia non secundum carnem ambulat sed secundum spiritum.”
34. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.9, 75: “Habet et monachorum ordo imaginem Spiritus Sancti, qui est amor dei, quia non posset ordo ipse despiciere mundum et ea que sunt mundi nisi provocatus amore dei et tractus ab eodem Spiritu, qui expulit dominum in desertum.”

35. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.9, 75: "Igitur primus ordo initiatus est ab Adam, secundus ab Ozia rege Iuda, tertius secundum aliquid ab Eliseo propheta, secundum aliquid a beato Benedicto. Quare sic? Quia Spiritus Sanctus a Patre Filioque procedit." Joachim elaborated on his understanding of the dual procession by stating, *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.10, 77: "[I]ta tamen ut ordo monachorum, qui quodammodo visus est incipere ab Eliseo, alio modo inciperet a beato Benedicto. Causa vero mysterii dicta est ibi ut ostendatur quod Spiritus Sanctus procedat a Patre; hic ut ostendatur quod procedit a filio."
36. *Expositio*, 134.
37. *Expositio*, 134: "Each one [status] is said to be necessary in its own right."
38. See *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.7, 71: "[Q]uod in operibus tertii status nondum potest assignari concordia nisi ex parte, quia nondum completa sunt ipsa opera nisi in modica sui parte."
39. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.5, 68: "Monachorum ordo . . . cuius fructificatio in temporibus finis."
40. *Liber de Concordia*, 2.1.8, 73: "Et sciendum quod littera veteris testamenti commissa fuit populo Iudeorum, littera novi populo Romano, spiritualibus autem viris spiritualis intelligentia que ex utraque procedit."
41. *Expositio*, 136.
42. *Expositio*, 136: "He went forth from the Temple that is in heaven . . . because the life which is signified by the cloud is lower than that which is signified by heaven . . . Although he who ascended upon the white cloud of the contemplative life presses forward in comparison with those who are involved in worldly cares, he who went forth from the Temple which is in heaven seems to be of a higher form of life."
43. *Expositio*, 136.
44. Joachim, *Letter to All the Faithful*, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 117.
45. Joachim, *Liber Figurarum*, "Commentary on the Seven-Headed Dragon," table 14, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 139.
46. Joachim, *Letter to All the Faithful*, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 139.
47. Joachim, *Commentary on Unknown Prophecy*, in *Visions of the End*, 131.
48. See *Il Libro delle Figure*, plate 14.
49. *Il Libro delle Figure*, plate 14: "Sexta persecutio inchoata est."
50. Saladin (1137–93), a successful military and political leader, was known in Europe for recapturing most of the Crusader cities in the Levant, most notably Jerusalem in 1187. For more on Saladin, see Malcolm Cameron Lyons, *Saladin: The Policies of Holy War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes* (London: Zed Books, 1984), 172–200.
51. Joachim, *Liber Figurarum*, plate 14, McGinn (trans.), *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 141.
52. Joachim did not give a name to the seventh head, as that Antichrist had yet to arise and be identified. See Joachim, *Il Libro delle Figure*, plate 14: "Hic est septimus rex qui proprie dicitur AntiXristus, quamvis sit alius similis, nec minor eo in malitia designatus in cauda."
53. Joachim, *Liber Figurarum*, "Commentary on the Seven-Headed Dragon," plate 14, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 137–8: "Those who fear the name of the Lord will rejoice when that head of the beast over which the sixth king reigns has been brought almost

to extermination and ruin. Then, after a few years, its wound will be healed and the king who will be in charge of it (whether it be Saladin if he is still alive, or another in his place) will gather a much larger army than before and incite universal war against God's elect. . . . In that time also the seventh head of the dragon will arise, namely, that king who is called Antichrist." By stating that the seventh Antichrist would arise in the West, and yet not identifying him, Joachim left open the possibility for a multitude of interpretations.

54. *Il Libro delle Figure*, plate 14: "Gog. Iste est ultimus antichristus."
55. Joachim, *Liber Figurarum*, "Commentary on the Seven-Headed Dragon," plate 14, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 139–40.
56. *Ibid.*, 140.
57. Joachim, *Liber Concordia*, in *Visions of the End*, 135.
58. For more information on the concept of the pastor angelicus see McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 186–9.
59. Marjorie Reeves has effectively demonstrated that the concept of an angelic pope traced its origins back to Joachim's visions of apocalyptic conflict. Roger Bacon, an English Franciscan, wrote in his *Compendium studii philosophiae* (ca. 1272) that an angelic pope would arise immediately after the tribulations of Antichrist. According to Reeves, this expectation was the first complete conception of such a Joachite figure. See Reeves, *Influence*, 46–8 for a discussion of Bacon; see 401–15 for the later development of the idea of an angelic pope.
60. See McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 186–95.
61. Joachim, *Liber Figurarum*, "Commentary on the Seven-Headed Dragon," plate 14, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 140. Here Joachim simply offers a retelling, in his own words, of the climactic battle of Apoc. 20.9–10, after which the devil is cast into the lake of fire with the Beast and the False Prophet.
62. Joachim, *Letter to the Abbot of Valbona*, in *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, 119: "[T]hey will begin to see a time of peace like nothing that has been since men began to exist on earth. No one will take their peace away from them."
63. Marjorie Reeves has concluded that the very language of the Lateran condemnation was phrased in such a way as to single out the doctrine itself, and thereby protect Joachim from scandal. She notes that shortly after Lateran IV, in 1220, Pope Honorius III ordered a public declaration stating that Joachim was a true and faithful Catholic. See Reeves, *Influence*, 28–36 and especially 32.
64. Joachim, *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, Epistola prologalis, in *Visions of the End*, 140: "As can be known from the letters of the former Pope Clement [III] which we have, and from the orders of Pope Lucius [III] and of Pope Urban [III], I have composed certain works and I am still writing to the extent that this labor recommends itself to the glory of God and the profit of the readers."
65. Joachim, *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, Epistola prologalis, in *Visions of the End*, 141.
66. For a more detailed account of the differing opinions, see Bernard McGinn, "The Abbot and the Doctors: Scholastic Reactions to the Radical Eschatology of Joachim of Fiore," in McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition* (Vermont, 1994), IX, 34.
67. McGinn, "Joachim of Fiore's tertius status: Some theological appraisals." In *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition*, Bernard McGinn, X, 221.

68. Ibid.
69. Reeves, *Influence*, 395.
70. Like most prophets, Joachim was rather vague, claiming that the church itself was pure and good, but also emphasizing that a renewal was at hand. Thus, it is best to keep Joachim's ideas of reform divorced from notions of ecclesiastical corruption and anticlericalism.
71. Reeves, *Influence*, 397.
72. Reeves, *Influence*, 397.
73. Reeves, *Influence*, 132.
74. For the Franciscan claim see E. Randolph Daniel, "A Re-Examination of Franciscan Joachimism," *Speculum*, 43, n. 4, 1968, 671–6; Reeves, *Influence*, 175–90. For the Dominicans, see Reeves, *Influence*, 161–74.
75. *De Secta*, 20: "Quam congregationem asserit in istis diebus novissimis a Deo pro salute animarum specialiter esse missam et electam, et illum qui preest super istam congregationem videlicet se ipsum, quem vocant fratrem Dulcinum, a Deo specialiter esse missum et electum."
76. *De Secta*, 20: He came "cum revelationibus factis sibi de presentibus et futuris . . . ad aperiendum prophetias et intelligentiam scripturarum novi et veteris Testamenti in temporibus istis novissimis."
77. *Practica*, 5.3.3, 88: "Dulcinus Novariensis scripsit in epistolis suis de predicto Gerardo quod ipse fuerit planta Dei pullulans in radice fidei."
78. *De Secta*, 20–1: "et ipsum modum vivendi Apostolicum asserit missum esse a deo in istis temporibus novissimis: et istum modum vivendi Apostolicum incepit frater Gerardus Segarelli parmensis a deo dilectissimus, et durabit et perseverabit usque ad finem mundi et fructificabit usque ad diem iudicii."
79. *De Secta*, 19–20: "[I]pse Dulcinus in principio asserit illam suam congregationem spirituales esse et propriam in proprio modo vivendi Apostolico et proprio nomine cum paupertate propria, et sine vinculo obedientie exterioris, set cum interiori tantum."
80. Reeves, *Influence*, 247.
81. *De Secta*, 20: "distinguit IIII status sanctorum fuisse in propriis modis vivendi."
82. *De Secta*, 20: "[I]n quo statu laudat bonum fuisse matrimonium."
83. *De Secta*, 20: "et tunc posteriores iam declinaverant a perfectione priorum."
84. *De Secta*, 20: "[Q]uia in fine posteriores declinaverunt a statu spirituali et bono priorum, ideo venit Christus ad sanandum infirmitatem illorum cum Apostolicis et discipulis."
85. *De Secta*, 20: "[E]t ipse fuit secundus status sanctorum in alio proprio modo vivendi qui fuerunt sicut medicina perfecta infirmitatis prioris populi, et ostenderunt veram fidem per miracula, et humilitatem, et patientiam, et paupertatem, et castitatem, et alia bona exempla vite."
86. *De Secta*, 20: "[E]t dum sic . . . non refrigebantur in amore dei et proximi, melius fuit sancto Silvestro pape et aliis successoribus suis possessiones terrenas et divicias suscipere et habere quam paupertas Apostolica."
87. *De Secta*, 21: "[E]t iste est quartus status et ultimus in proprio modo vivendi Apostolico et differt a modo vivendi sancti Francisci et sancti Dominici, quia vita illorum fuit multas habere domos et illuc mendicata deferre, set nos, ait Dulcinus, nec domus habemus, nec etiam mendicata portare debemus, et propter hoc vita nostra maior est et ultima omnibus medicina."

88. *De Secta*, 21: "In primo debebat esse sicut et fuit, bona et virgo et casta et persecutiones passa et hec fuit usque ad beatum Silvestrum papam."
89. *De Secta*, 21: "In secundo debebat esse sicut et fuit, dives et honorata, ipsa permanente in bonitate et castitate." See also, *De Secta*, 21: "In tertio debebat esse, sicut et est vere, maliciosa, dives, et honorata: et hec est modo, ait Dulcinus, tempore quo predicta scripsit, et durabit donec ipsi clerici, monachi et omnes religiosi sint morte crudelissima interempti."
90. *De Secta*, 21: "[D]e quibus subdit ibidem plurima mala, necnon Bonifacius VIII qui tunc preerat romane Sedi de quo similiter ibidem plurima mala subdit." One of Dolcino's foremost criticisms of the pontiff derived from the generally-held conception that Boniface had orchestrated the retirement of his immediate predecessor, the hermit-turned-pope, Celestine V. Many followers of the prophecies of Joachim, and even Dolcino himself, believed that Celestine's very public adherence to and promotion of the *vita apostolica* marked him as the angelic pope. See Raniero Orioli. "Il ruolo di celestino V nell'economica salvifica eresiarca Dolcino da novara." In *Celestino V e i suoi tempi: realtà spirituale e realtà politica. Atti del 4° Convegno storico internazionale, L'Aquila, 26-27 agosto 1989*, Walter Capezzali (ed.) (L'Aquila, Italy: Centro Celestiniano, Sezione storica, 1990), 71-96.
91. *De Secta*, 21: "In quarto debebat esse sicut et iam esse incepit, bona et pauper et persecutiones passa in proprio modo vivendi Apostolico reformata: et ista quarta mutatio fuit incepta per fratrem Gerardum parmensem . . . et perseverabit perfecta et durabit et fructificabit usque ad finem mundi."
92. *De Secta*, 21: "Imperatorem vero relevatum, exponit et asserit ibidem esse Fredericum regem tunc Cilicie, filium quondam Petri regis Aragonum. Qui Fredericus debet relevari in imperatorem et facere reges novos."
93. *De Secta*, 21: "[Fredericus debet relevari] Bonifacium papam pugnando habere et facere occidi cum aliis occidendis."
94. *De Secta*, 21: "[O]mnes, inquam, supradicti divino gladio exterminabuntur ab imperatore relevato . . . et occidentur et consumentur per universam terram."
95. *De Secta*, 22: "Fredericus imperator relevatus regnabit et imperabit per universum mundum magis quam fecerit aliquis imperator, et durabit usque ad tempus Anti-Christi."
96. For a more detailed analysis and excerpts from the text itself, see McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 70-6. Other authors writing on the same theme are Adso, with his *Letter on the Antichrist*, McGinn, *Visions*, 82-7 and the section on Imperial Apocalyptic thought, also McGinn, *Visions*, 117-21.
97. McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 72.
98. *De Secta*, 22-3: "[I]n istis diebus nostris . . . sub anno Domini MCCCIII, quatuor pape sunt scripti, duo boni, scilicet primus et novissimus, et duo mali scilicet secundus et tercius. Primum papam exponit et dicit esse Celestinum [V] qui cessit papatum Secundum vero papam exponit et dicit esse Bonifacium octavum qui successit Celestino Tertium vero papam dicit esse successorem Bonifacii quem non nominat nomine proprio Quartum vero papam non nominat nomine proprio quem asserit esse sanctum . . . in ecclesia erit unus papa sanctus qui tunc regnabit."

99. *De Secta*, 23: “[E]t hec omnia fient . . . in illis duobus annis, scilicet MCCCIII et MCCCIV.”
100. *De Secta*, 23: “[E]t ipse papa quartus sanctus erit . . . nec eligitur a cardinalibus, quia Frederico ipsi cardinales cum tercio papa novo capite eorum erunt consumpmati, set, Frederico imperante et regnante, eligitur a deo.”
101. *De Secta*, 23: “[E]t tunc, destructis maliciosis predictis, ipsi regnabunt et fructificabunt usque ad finem mundi.”
102. *De Secta*, 21–2: “[E]t sub illo papa erunt illi qui sunt de statu suo Apostolico et aliam aliis de clericis et religiosis qui unientur eis, qui divino auxilio a predicto gladio fuerint liberati, et tunc accipient Spiritus Sancti gratiam sicut acceperunt Apostolici in ecclesia primitiva, et deinde fructificabunt in aliis usque ad finem mundi.”
103. *De Secta*, 23: “[E]t sic renovabitur ecclesia.”
104. McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 226. The notion of the “perseverance of the saints” in times of trial and tribulation comes from Rev. 13.10 and 14.12.
105. McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition*, VII, 25.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 9: IN THE VALLEY OF HERESY

1. Corrado Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana e Resistenza Montanara* (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2002), 34.
2. Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 106.
3. Francesco Cognasso, *Storia di Novara* (Novara: Lazzarelli, 1971), 160; Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 100.
4. Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 100–1
5. For the communal nature of villages, especially those not immediately manorial in nature, see Georges Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*, Cynthia Postan (trans.) (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 55.
6. Ibid.
7. Cognasso, *Storia di Novara*, 124.
8. Maria Giovanna Virgili, “I possessi dei Biandrate nei Secoli XI–XIV,” *Bollettino Storico-Bibliografico Subalpino*, 62, n. 2, 1974, 639–49.
9. Ibid., 654–61.
10. Carlo Guido Mor, *Carte Valsesiane fino al Secolo XV* (Turin: Biblioteca della Società Storica Subalpina, 1933), XI, n. 13, 25–7.
11. Ibid., n. 14, 27–9. See Giovannina Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: Structures of Political Rule*, Rosalind Brown Jensen (trans.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 213 where he claims that the emperor’s agreement with the Biandrate was “not a feudal investiture, but rather a generic imperial guardianship of the whole patrimony of the Biandrate” that recognized the distinction “between goods possessed in allod and those held in benefice.”
12. Ibid., n. 15, 30–1.

13. Unfazed by their losses to Vercelli, the Biandrate remained faithful to their previous alliances with the German emperors, signing agreements with Henry VI in 1196 and again with Otto IV in 1209 that once again confirmed all the remaining allodial and feudal rights to the Biandrate. See Mor, *Carte Valsesiane*, n. 19, 40–3 and n. 22, 47–9.
14. Mor, *Carte Valsesiane*, n. 24–5, 50–6.
15. Ibid., n. 26, 56–9.
16. Ibid., n. 27–8, 59–68.
17. Mornese, *Fra Dolcino*, 23–4. For more detailed accounts of the episcopal and feudal incursions into Valsesia, and their results, see Alberto Bossi, *Fra Dolcino, gli Apostolici e la Valsesia* (Borgosesia: Palmiro Corradini, 1973), 69–87; Alberto Bossi, “Fra Dolcino e i Valsesiani,” *Novarien*, 5, 1973, 41–9; Grado Giovanni Merlo, “Fra Dolcino e i movimenti di rivolta contadina.” In *Storia della Società Italiana: La Crisi del Sistema Comunale*, Giovanni Cherubini, Franco della Peruta, Ettore Leporé, Giorgio Mori, Giulano Procacci and Rosario Villari (eds) (Milan: Nicola Teti-Editore, 1982), pt. 2, vol. 7, 281–99. For the Biandrate, see Paola Guglielmotti, *Comunità e Territorio: Villaggi del Piemonte Medievale* (Rome: Viella, 2001), 183–91.
18. For the papal legate’s warning, see Mor, n. 31, 81; for the bishop’s warning, see n. 32, 82–3.
19. Mor, n. 40, 90–3.
20. J. K. Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy*, 11.
21. For the 1260 pact, see Mor, n. 50, 118–27. Regarding the label of bandits and rebels, the pact states, 125: “quod comune Vercellarum teneant et debent tenere bannitos homines vallis Scicide qui sunt banniti per ipsos comites, eo quod sunt rebelles ipsorum comitum . . . et generaliter per commune Vercellarum teneantur banniti omnes homines vallis Scicide qui per ipsos comites de cetero bannizabuntur pro maleficio.” For discussion of the impact of the pact, see Federico Tonetti, *La Valsesia Descritta e Illustrata nei Principali Fatti e Avvenimenti della sua Storia* (Varallo: Tipografia G. Zanfa, 1911), 300 and Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 54–7.
22. Mor, n. 56, 149: “dictum comune et homines vallis Siccide et potestas, qui pro tempore fuerit, habeat plenam fortiam et virtutem et iurisdictionem et potestatem omnes personas dicte vallie.”
23. Ibid., 150: “aliqua persona, que sit de comitibus de Blandrato, tam legitimis quam bastardis, non possint nec debeant in perpetuum habotare in tota valle Siccida, nec in ipsa valle modo aliquo vel aliqua de cause intrare.”
24. Ibid., 151: “aliquis de comitibus de Blandrato nec bastardis eorum non possint nec debeant aliquo modo vel aliqua de causa hinc in antea habere in valle Siccida aliquam iurisdictionem sue aliquod bannum vel donegum; et hoc statuetur et ordinetur per comune Novarie, et ita statuerunt et ordinaverunt.”
25. Ibid., 153: “aliqua persona vallis Siccide non possint removeri de ipsa valle nec poni in ostagio seu in confinibus per potestatem sue comune Novarie aliqua occaxione, que dici vel excogitari posset.”
26. Ibid., 154: “si aliqua persona vallis Siccide fuerit exquixitus per nuncios comunis Novarie ad eundum Novariam vel in aliqua parte aliqua de causa, vel ad eundum in exercitum in aliqua parte.”

27. Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana*, 77–8.
28. Most of these incidents occurred further to the west in the area around Biella, where in 1288 there was an incident of resistance to the bishop of Vercelli over a disputed excommunication. The resistance turned into open warfare by 1295 and involved the towns of Ronco, Zumaglia and Vigiliano. See Ferdinando Gabotto, “Biella e i Vescovi di Vercelli,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* v. 18, 1896, 24–6.
29. Corrado Mornese and Gustavo Buratti (eds), *Fra Dolcino e gli Apostolici tra eresia, rivolta e roghi* (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2000), 24.
30. See Michel Mollat, *Popular Revolutions of the Late Middle Ages* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1973), 87.
31. *Historia*, f.29 v: “Et cum ipse frater Dulcinus cum quamplurimis sequacibus esset in loco Serravallis et intellexisset quod inquisitores pravitatis heretice eum persequerentur, auxiliantibus sibi quibusdam de dicto loco Serravallis, qui sibi assistebant, aufugit inde cum sua pestifera comitiva.”
32. The *Historia* indicates that the podestà of Vercelli, along with inquisitors, tried and condemned the rector of the church of Serravalle along with several other men from the community for providing support to the heretics. See *Historia*, f.29 v: “ex quo graves processus facti fuerunt et formati tam per inquisitores hereticorum quam per dominum potestatem Vercellarum contra rectorem ecclesie Serravallis et contra homines dicti loci Serravallis et tandem condemnati fuerunt.”
33. *Historia*, f.29 v: “reducerunt se in vallem Sicidam diocesis novariensis in domo cuiusdam rustici divitis, que dicebatur Milanus Sola de loco Camparolii diocesis novariensis sine Varallis, qui ipsum Dulcinum . . . ibique pluribus mensibus stetit.” For the building of homes, see *Historia*, f.30 r: “ibique plures domos et mansuculas construxerunt et in ipso monte pluribus mensibus permanserunt.”
34. *Historia*, f.29v–30r: “Ad quem Dulcinum homines et mulieres de diversis mundi partibus veniebant audiri suas falsas predicationes et erronea documenta.” See also, *Historia*, f.30r: “alliis multis personis de dicto loco Camparolii et aliis locis circumstantibus cum omnibus eorum bonis, quas personas ipse Dulcinus traxerat ad suam falsam sectam.” This gathering of both men and women to hear the message of poverty is strikingly similar to the events surrounding Segarelli’s teachings.
35. See Francesco Cognasso, “La Crociata contro Fra Dolcino,” chap. 20. In *Storia di Novara* (Novara: Libreria Lazzarelli, 1992), 299–304.
36. *Historia*, f.30r: “quos idem dominus episcopus miserat pro exterminio dicte secte et defensione fidei catholice et populi Christiani.”
37. *Historia*, f.30v: “mons Parietis Calve, ibique convenerunt de diversis partibus mundi homines et mulieres de secta ipsius Dulcini.”
38. *Historia*, f.30v: “quod fuerunt in numero mille quatuorcentum et ultra.” For a discussion of the limited area of the Parete Calva see Corrado Mornese, *Eresia Dolciniana e Resistenza Montanara* (Rome: Derive Approdi, 2002), 123–4.
39. *Historia*, f.30v: “Et ibi [mons Parietis Calve] domos quamplures et habitacula construxerunt.”
40. *Historia*, f.30v–31r: “potestas Varallis et homines dicti loci et locorum circumstantium dicte Vallis Sicide fuerunt ad resistendum ipsis hereticis. Et ipsi canes pessimi . . .

irruerunt cum multitudine onerosa in ipsos potestatem et homines dicte Vallis cum armis et lapidibus ibique plures homines occiderunt in conflictu et alios quamplures ad dictum saxum Parietis Calve captivos duxerunt et eos usque ad extremum sue substantie redimi fecerunt . . . [i]nter quos captus fuit potestas premissus, qui erat de Novaria nobilis et de genere Bruxatorum.”

41. Apparently, the Apostles were in such dire straits that they were forced to eat mice, horses, dogs and other animals, even roasted twigs. See *Historia*, f.31r: “Tandem ad tantam famem et penuriam devenerunt, quod carnes murium equorum canum et aliarum bestiarum brutarum, fenum coctum cum serpo comedebant;” *Historia*, ff.31r–31v: “Et cum super dicto monte per annum et ultra stetissent et habitassent et ibi ulterius habitare non possent, quia ibi fame et miseria multi ex eis moriebantur.” By the winter of 1306–7, according to the author of the *Historia*, the Apostles were even forced into cannibalizing the corpses of those who had fallen in battle: *Historia*, ff.41r–41v: “devenerunt ad tantam miseriam, quod quamplures eorum carnes tam humanas quam canum et aliorum bestiarum comedebant et, quod est horrible ad dicendum, mortuo aliquo ipsorum Gazzorum in bello et huiusmodi, alii accipiebant carnem eius et ponebant ad coquendam et comedebant propter penuriam et magnam famem.”
42. *Historia*, f.31v: “millesimo trecentesimo sexto die Iovis decimo mensis martii . . . recesserunt ab infra transeuntes montes magnos, vias inexcogitabiles fecerunt per loca difficilima et nives altissimas, noctis tempore intraverunt diocesim vercellensem et ascenderunt super quemdam montem fortissimum, qui tunc appellabatur mons Rebellus.”
43. *Historia*, f.34r: “Consilio capitaneorum suorum et aliorum nobilium et bonorum hominum, nuntios suos ad summum pontificem cum litteris suis casum predictum explicando, qui gratiose concessit suas indulgentias plenarias omnibus Christi fidelibus, qui personaliter irent ad debellandum et expugnandum dictos hereticos vel dare volentibus stipendia debita et opportuna persone pugnare volenti per mensem contra predictos canes.” The first of the Avignon popes, Clement V had very close ties to secular lords, above all Philip IV, king of France from 1285–1314. The Apostles were not the only “dissident” group to face the heavy hand of this pope, for it was Clement V, along with Philip IV, who ordered the persecution and destruction of the Knights Templars beginning in 1307, coincidentally the same year as the annihilation of the Order of Apostles. See Norman Housley, *The Italian Crusades: The Papal-Angevin Alliance and the Crusades against Christian Lay Powers, 1254–1343* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982); Sophia Menache, *Clement V* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Malcolm Barber, *The Trial of the Templars* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978). Note that Mollat argues that Clement was acting under intense pressure from Philip IV when he agreed to condemn the Templars. See G. Mollat, *The Popes at Avignon, 1305–1378* (Paris, 1949), Janet Love (trans.) (New York: T. Nelson, 1963).
44. *Historia*, ff.31v–32r: “qui nulla victualia habebant . . . [i]n adventu ipsorum hereticorum descenderunt ipsi Gazzari ad villam et ecclesiam Triverii summo mane, de quo homines Triverii nullatenus advertabant et improvisi erant, et spoliaverunt ecclesiam Triverii exportando calices libros et alia bona et derobaverunt alias domos quam plurimas de Triverio.” The term “Gazzari” had originally simply meant “Cathar” in Italian, but

developed into a generic, but still disparaging, term applied to heretics in general, including Cathars, Waldensians, and, later, the Apostles. See Malcolm Lambert, *The Cathars* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 295; Walter Wakefield and Austin Evans (eds), *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969; repr. 1991), 41–3; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent, c.1250–c.1450* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967; single volume repr. 1999), 194, n. 2; 466–7. See also Lambert's discussion of the "transmutation" of the term "Patavene," also in northern Italy, to designate Italian heretics in general: Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 295.

45. *Historia*, f.39v: "In ecclesia Moxi multa mala facere temptaverunt: lapides de altari maiori diruere et mappam, que cooperiebat ipsum altare, exportare voluerunt et multa alia bona; sed, volente deo, non potuerunt extrahere de altari."
46. *Historia*, f.39r: "adhuc restant multa alia mala narranda et explicanda, que per ipsos pessimos Gazzaros et hereticos sunt perpetrata. Ipsi namque Gazzari, dum erant in monte Triverii predicto, multos de fidelibus Christi suspenderunt in furcis, inter quos fuit suspensus quidam puer parvulus innocens etatis decem annorum vel circa . . . multos alios viros suspenderunt videntibus uxoribus et parentibus."
47. *Historia*, f.39r: "quibusdam mulieribus labia et nasum, quibusdam mammas, aliis pedes amputaverunt."
48. *Historia*, f.39r: "Cuidam mulieri pregnantī manum et brachium amputaverunt, que in crastino peperit super dicto monte et filius natus statim periit sine baptismo."
49. *Historia*, ff.41v–42r: "Et in die iovis sancta homines, qui pugnabant contra dictos Gazzaros, acceperunt bastitam, que erat apud locum qui dicitur Stavellus, et in plana Stavelli duravit pugna quasi per totam diem iovis sanctam."
50. *Historia*, f.40r: "Et ad hec mala facienda tam mulieres quam viri erant prompte pariter et recentes, imo sepiissime mulieres vestimenta et arma virilia ferebant."
51. *Historia*, f.35r–35v: "Multi igitur de utraque parte mortui et multi vulnerati fuerunt et proiecti in quodam flumine, qui postea appellatus fuit rivus Carnaschus, eo quod aqua illius fluminis erat rubra velut sanguis propter corpora interfectorum et vulneratorum."
52. *Historia*, ff.42v–43r: "dominus papa suas litteras destinavit . . . [t]unc prefatus dominus episcopus, convocatis prelatis personis religiosiis clericis et laicis iurisperitis quampluribus et habita diligenti deliberatione maturoque consilio de premissis, predictos Dulcinum, Longinum et Margaritam de Tridento tradidit iudicio seculari."
53. Benevenuti de Imola, *Comentum*, v. 3, 361.
54. Benevenuti de Imola, *Comentum*, v. 3, 362: "Illa imbuta doctrina Dulcini numquam deseruit mandata eius, imo pertinacius eo fuit firma, considerata infirmitate sexus. Nam cum multi nobiles quaererent eam in uxorem, tum propter eius pecuniam magnam, numquam potuit flecti. Unde pari poena cum dulci Dulcino suo ferro et igne lacerata illum audacter sequuta est ad inferos." See also, *Historia*, f.43r: "Et illa combusta fuit presente ipso vidente comburi eam."
55. *Historia*, f.43r: "Postmodum Dulcinus et Longinus predicti, ligatis manibus et pedibus ipsorum super plaustis positi, in loco alto, ut ab omnibus videri possent, positisque in eorum conspectum, vasibus igne plenīs ordinatis ad calefaciendum tenabulas et

comburendum carnes ipsorum, adhibitibus carnificibus, qui cum tenabulis ferri candentis carnes eorum laniabant et frustatim in ignem ponebant, ductique fuerunt per plures vias, ut eorum pena longior et gravior esset.”

56. Dolcino's arrival and the armed response of Vercelli were not the only causes of the uprising. In fact, in 1304 just before Dolcino arrived the town of Gattinara in Lower Valsesia revolted against the communes of both Vercelli and Novara, and their bishops. Since Dolcino arrived in the immediate vicinity of Gattinara in 1304, it is difficult to determine if he chose this particular location because it was rebelling or if it was merely a coincidence.

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